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TORONTO

A Third Book of Modern Poetry

Selected and Arranged by

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PREFACE

"Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
And kings a dubious legend of their reign;
The swords of Caesars, they are less than rust;
The poet doth remain."

So wrote Sir William Watson in one of the most beautiful poems in this little collection. It is a daring assertion; yet true enough if the word "poet" be strictly interpreted and the title be not bestowed on every versifier without reason and discrimination. Such brave faith in immortality takes but little count, however, of the wayward fashions of time. Every age treats with scant respect the loyalties and enthusiasms of the preceding one. Most poets "abide our question"; only a few, like Shakespeare himself, are free. Our own generation scorns, for the most part, the very poet whom Sir William Watson praises so liberally in his elegy: it has no mind for his philosophy and no ear for his faultless language—

"icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more."

So our criticism of the poets writing to-day will, of necessity, be tentative: we can look upon their work only with a false perspective of vision that cannot but mar our judgment. The literature of any age is bound, in Tennyson's own phrase, to be "foreshorten'd in the tract of time." We see through a glass darkly and find

it difficult to escape from the merely fashionable to the permanent, or assess with any certainty that which is open before our eyes.

To read this book then is, in some manner, to travel over unknown and uncharted country. The poems here selected represent, perhaps, the best of to-day in that peculiar type of poetry which spreads beyond the confines of the lyric. *It is not for us, reading them now, to anticipate their final place in English Literature ; but it is possible to trace in them some of the characteristics of modern poetry as a whole.* While the maturer judgment that comes of a study in true perspective must necessarily wait upon the years, we can at least appreciate in these poems the elements that belong to poetry in every age.

It seems to-day as if the poet had lost that old sense of vocation which once separated him from other men. He no longer rises up "with his singing robes about him." In an age when professionalism is rife he remains grandly an amateur. His poetry is for the most part incidental—a running accompaniment to his everyday life among ordinary men. Like Elia, he works often in the confinement of an office, and only at the end "leaves his India House for ever." He lives, as it were, in two different worlds—the one of business and the other of poetry ; and this mode of life has its reflection in his work. For his theme is generally concrete, allied to the familiar. There is little of the abstract or philosophical about his poetry : only rarely does he become emotional. He is not to be found moralising on Westminster Bridge, or even dreaming sadly by the sea of the days that are no more.

So we may expect, especially in a collection of longer poems, a realism of subject and of atmosphere. It reveals itself at its simplest in Rupert Brooke's *The Great Lover* :

"White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, faery dust;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamplight . . ."

As we read this poem of the twentieth century we go back a long way to Herrick's child-like joy in his house and garden :

"Lord, I confess too, when I dine,
The pulse is Thine,
And all those other bits that be
There placed by Thee;
The wort, the purslane, and the mess
Of water-cress . . .
Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay
Her eggs each day;
Besides my healthful ewes to bear
Me twins each year;
The while the conduits of my kine
Run cream for wine."

But beyond such simplicity the realism develops in different ways : at one time in the fine, coloured romance of the trivial that characterises *Sent from Egypt* ; at another in the gentle reminiscence of *Roads*, trembling sometimes into pathos and hinting the tragedy and the triumph of war ; yet again in the characteristic sorrow of Thomas Hardy and in the stark grief of *The Pigeons*.* It is true that here and there we get a little philosophical moralising—in Masfield's *Fragments*, for instance, and in Drinkwater's *The Carver in Stone* ; but that element

* See Mr. Freeman's own note on p. 96. The poem is based on a newspaper paragraph recording the incident that made so profound an impression on the poet's mind.

is rare and fitful and somewhat strange to the modern spirit except as it is revealed in the grimness of Hardy and A. E. Housman.

Little ought to be said here concerning the language and style of the moderns. Again we are too near to judge or make comparison. There seems to be on the one hand an almost Wordsworthian approach to the everyday language of prose, an ostentatious delight in "calling a spade a spade" and in avoiding the conventions of poetic language; and on the other hand a tendency, not to a conventional vocabulary and style, but to what Bagehot, writing of Browning, called the grotesque in art. Unfamiliar words and tortured phrases sometimes spoil in the poets of to-day the essential simplicity of the greatest poetry. Now and then, even, the idea that obscurity is itself a virtue seems to prevail. It is true that sometimes the magic of poetry outruns the understanding and remains independent of mental interpretation by reason of its direct aesthetic and spiritual appeal. But such poetry is rare: the magic is to be found more than occasionally in Shakespeare and in Keats and in Coleridge's three great poems. For the most part we read to understand, and the poem that puzzles us mentally without touching us emotionally has no real existence outside the conception of its writer.

The present collection contains nothing of that modern exotic verse which, with its striving after the original, has attained to a mere transient eccentricity. The poems are at least in the tradition of poetry and are to be judged by those elemental standards which, after all, vary but little from age to age. They are of necessity

the characteristic product of the era, but they do not belong to the passing whim of fashion. There are in them, doubtless, some of the characteristic defects of our modern poetry ; but to be justly representative must be counted for righteousness in an anthology of poems that cannot yet come before the judgment bar of posterity.

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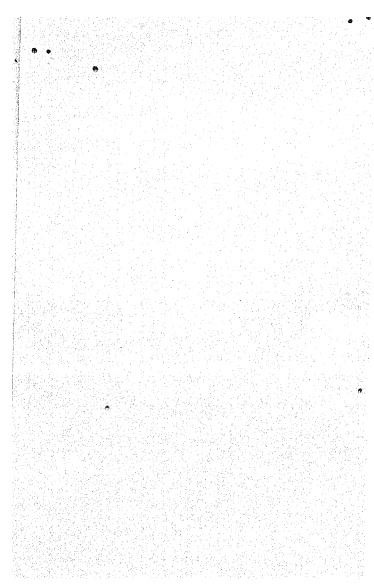
It is a pleasure to acknowledge the General Editor's timely assistance throughout and his especial kindness in allowing me to use his notes on Nos. 7, 11 and 15 which are printed in Binyon's *Golden Treasury of Modern Lyrics* (E.L.S.). To Mr. G. H. Vallins, my collaborator in many school books, as well as to Mr. K. M. King I also owe a deep debt of gratitude for generous interest and help.

H. A. T.

CROYDON, *July* 1927.

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I
THE BACCHANAL OF ALEXANDER

I

A WONDROUS rumour fills and stirs
The wide Carmanian Vale ;
On leafy hills the sunburnt vintagers
Stand listening ; silent is the echoing flail
Upon the threshing-floors :
Girls in the orchards one another hail
Over their golden stores.
" Leave the dewy apples hanging flushed,
Ripe to drop
In our baskets ! Leave the heavy grapes uncrushed, 10
Leave the darkened figs, a half-pulled crop,
Olive-boughs by staves unbeaten, come,
All our hills be hushed !
For a Conqueror, nay a God,
Comes into our land this day,
From the Eastern desert dumb,
That no mortal ever trod :
Come we down to meet him on his way ! "

From reddening vineyards steeped in sun,
Trees that with riches droop,
Down the green upland men and maidens run
Or under the low leaves with laughter stoop.

But now they pause, they hear
 Far trampling sounds ; and many a soft-eyed troop
 Murmurs a wondering fear.

" Wherefore hast thou summoned us afar,
 Voice so proud ?

Who are ye that so imperious are ?

Is it he to whom all India bowed,

Bacchus, and the great host that pursue,

30

Triumphing, his car ;

Whom our fathers long foretold ?

O if it be he, the God indeed,

May his power our vines endue

With prosperity fourfold.

Bring we all ripe offerings for his need ! "

Slowly along the vine-robed vale move on,

Like those that walk in dream,

The ranks of Macedon.

O much-proved men, why doubt ye truth so sweet ? 40

This is that fair Carmania, that did seem

So far to gain, yet now is at your feet.

'Tis no Circean magic greenly crowds

This vale of elms, the laden vines uprearing,

The small flowers in the grass, the illumined clouds,

Trembling streams with rushes lined,

All in strangeness reappearing

Like a blue morn to the blind !

Worn feet go happy, and parched throats may laugh,

Or blissful cold drops from dipt helmets quaff ; 50

Dear comrades, flinging spears down, stand embraced

And heap this rich oblivion on the waste

Of torment whence they came ;

That land of salt sand vaulted o'er with flame,
 That furnace, which for sixty days they pierced,
 Wrapt in a hot slow cloud of pricking grains,
 On ever crumbling mounds, through endless plains,
 And ravening hands scooped fire, not water, for their
 thirst.

Streams of Carmania, never have ye seen
 Such mirrored rapture of strong limbs unclad, 60
 Lips pressing, lover-like, delicious green
 Of leaves, or breaking into laughter mad ;
 Out-wearied ranks, that, couched in gloom serene,
 Let idle memory toy
 With torment past whose pangs enrich the gust of joy.

II

O peerless Alexander ! Still
 From his kindling words they glow.
 Like a straight shaft to a bow
 Is their strength unto his will.
 He hath done what no man ever dared : 70
 That fierce desert, where great Cyrus lost
 All save seven of his unnumbered host,
 Where the proud Semiramis despaired,
 He hath brought his thousands through.
 Vainly, vainly Wind and Fire
 Stormed against the way of his desire :
 They at last their tamer knew.
 O'er mile-broad rivers, like young brooks, he stept,
 Walls of unconquered cities overleapt.
 And now Earth yields, for storm and strife and heat, 80
 Her greenest valley to his feet.

But lo ! the soft Carmanian folk,
Round these warriors gathering nigh,
Down the slopes with murmur shy
The benignant God invoke.

While they stand in wonder and in doubt,
Comes a throng in leaves their heads arraying,
Some on pipes and some on tabors playing,
" Bacchus, Bacchus is our King," they shout,
" Magic mirth into our blood he pours ;

90

Join us, strangers, in our feast !
All our parching toil hath ceased.
Give us of your fruitful valley's stores ! "
Apples they heap on shields in golden domes,
And spearpoints bear the dripping honeycombs.
" Our Bacchus bids you to his joy," they sing ;
" Lo, where he comes, the king ! "

Two massy ivory cars, together bound,
Roll through the parting throng ;
A whole uprooted vine enwreathes them round ; 100
Long tendrils over the gold axles trail,
While jubilant pipe and chanted song
The cars' oncoming hail.

By the dark bunches idle helmets and greaves
Are hung, and swords that on Hydaspes shone ;
Heroic shoulders gleam betwixt the leaves !
There sits reclined on rugs of Susa spread,
Throned amid his Seven of Macedon,
Alexander ! his victorious head

Bound with ivy and pale autumn flowers.

110

Ah, what a sunny redolence of showers
The wind wafts round him from this promised land !

Over Hephaestion's neck is laid one hand,
 Lightly the other holds a spear ; but now
 No passion fires his eye, nor deep thought knots his brow.
 Like his own Pella breathes this upland air ;
 A joy-born beauty flushes up his face,
 O'ersmoothing old fell rages, to replace
 Youth in lost lines most indolently fair.
 Remembrance is at peace, desire forgone, 120
 And those winged brows their watchful menace ease
 In languor proud as a storm-sailing swan
 New lighted on a mere from the wild seas.
 Beat, thrilling drums, beat low, and pipes sound on,
 While his full soul doth gaze
 From this the topmost hour of all his glorious days.

III

The shy Carmanians awed
 Gaze on that sun-like head.
 " Is it he," they murmur, " who led
 The mirth of the vineyard abroad ? 130
 Surely none else may bear
 So regal a beauty ; yet why
 On us turns not his eye ?
 We have heard that he loves not care,
 But the dance and idle glee
 Of the laughing Satyr tribe.
 Could toil those brows inscribe ?
 Is it he ? is it surely he ?
 Are these the revellers of his train ?
 Yet surely these have passed through fire, through
 pain ! 140

Thy pleasure, but thy throes were thine alone.
Dulled is the joy that hath no need to dare ;
Match thy great self, and breed another heir
To those high deeds, from which thy kindled fame
Runs, as the world's hope runs from youth to youth
 afame.

Climb, climb again to those lone eagle skies,
Where ocean's unadventured circle bends
And dragon ignorance girdles the world's ends !—
As fire leaps up a tower, that thought leaps to his
 eyes. 180

“ Off, Maenad mummary,” he cries ; his brow
Strips of its garland with indignant hands,
Starts up, and plants his ringing spear ; and now,
Soul-flushed through radiant limbs, a man transfigured
 stands.

With joy the marvelling Carmanians bow,
From their long doubting freed :
“ It is the God,” they cry, “ the enraptured God indeed ! ”
LAURENCE BINYON.

II

“ THERE IS A HILL . . . ”

THERE is a hill beside the silver Thames,
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine :
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
Steeplly the thickets to his floods decline.

 Straight trees in every place

 Their thick tops interlace,

And pendant branches trail their foliage fine
 Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows :
His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade, 10
Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes
Straight to the caverned pool his toil has made.

His winter floods lay bare
The stout roots in the air :
His summer streams are cool, when they have played
Among their fibrous hair.

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,
And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
Robbing the golden market of the bees : 20

And laden barges float
By banks of myosote ;
And scented flag and golden flower-de-lys
Delay the loitering boat.

And on this side the island, where the pool
Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass
The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,
And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass ;
Where spreading crowfoot mars
The drowning nenuphars, 30
Waving the tassels of her silken grass
Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing grows,
Not the white water-lily spoked with gold ;
Though best she loves the hollows, and well knows
On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold :
Yet should her roots but try
Within these deeps to lie,

Not her long reaching stalk could ever hold
Her waxen head so high.

40

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book,
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery ;
And dreams, or falls asleep,
While curious fishes peep
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully
Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering care
Upon a staff propping his weary knees,
May by the pathway of the forest fare :
As from a buried day
Across the mind will stray
Some perishing mute shadow,—and unaware
He passeth on his way.

50

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream :
Or lead his love there when the hot hours chafe
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam ;
Or watch, as fades the light,
The gibbous moon grow bright,
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,
And glorify the night.

60

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames ?
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow !

O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,
No sharer of my secret I allow :

Lest ere I come the while

Strange feet your shades défile ;

70

Or lest the burly oarsman turn his prow

Within your guardian isle.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

III

THE GREAT LOVER

I HAVE been so great a lover : filled my days
So proudly with the splendour of Love's praise,
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,

And all dear names men use, to cheat despair,
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.

Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,

My night shall be remembered for a star

10

That outshone all the suns of all men's days.

Shall I not crown them with immortal praise

Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared with me

High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see

The inenarrable godhead of delight ?

Love is a flame ;—we have beaconed the world's night.

A city :—and we have built it, these and I.

An emperor :—we have taught the world to die.

So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,

And the high cause of Love's magnificence,

20

And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming. . . .
These I have loved :

White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
Ringed with blue lines ; and feathery, faery dust ;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamplight ; the strong crust
Of friendly bread ; and many-tasting food ; 30
Rainbows ; and the blue bitter smoke of wood ;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers ;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,
Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon ;
Then, the cool kindness of sheets, that soon
Smooth away trouble ; and the rough male kiss
Of blankets ; grainy wood ; live hair that is
Shining and free ; blue-massing clouds ; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine ;
The benison of hot water ; furs to touch ; 40
The good smell of old clothes ; and other such—
The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,
Hair's fragrance and the musty reek that lingers
About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . .

Dear names,
And thousand other throng to me ! Royal flames ;
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring ;
Holes in the ground ; and voices that do sing ;
Voices in laughter, too ; and body's pain,
Soon turned to peace ; and the deep-panting train ;
Firm sands ; the little dulling edge of foam 50
That browns and dwindles as the wave goes home ;

And washen stones, gay for an hour ; the cold
Graveness of iron ; moist black earthen mould ;
Sleep ; and high places ; footprints in the dew ;
And oaks ; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-new ;
And new-peeled sticks ; and shining pools on grass ;—
All these have been my loves. And these shall pass,
Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
To hold them with me through the gate of Death. 60
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust
And sacramented covenant to the dust.
—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again, and make
New friends, now strangers. . . .

But the best I've known
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is blown
About the winds of the world, and fades from brains
Of living men, and dies.

Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again 70
This one last gift I give : that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed,
Praise you, " All these were lovely " ; say, " He loved."

RUPERT BROOKE.

IV

SOLUS HYPERBOREAS

(Ode to a pocket edition of Virgil in the possession of D. G. Lillie, biologist to the British Antarctic Expedition, 1910.)

MUCH-TRAVELLED, curious book, I write this reverent ode
To celebrate thy fame, and praise thy loving carrier;
That thou wast Virgil, always a most precious load,
Now doubly wonderful, secure in safe abode,

First of all Virgils to have reached the Great Ice
Barrier.

There, like thine Orpheus, didst thou the lone realm
enchant,

Thrilling eternal snows with song unprecedented :
There sawst an Erebus more grim and gaunt

Than that whose gloomy king

Wept and relented, 10

Hearing but once the Thracian minstrel sing,

And the remorseless powers of sightless Death repented.

A desert even for shades too bare

Was that thy presence graced,

Pinnacled with a skyey gorge

That fumes like the Sicilian forge—

But what man's bleak imagination dare

With snowy Cyclops haunt the inhuman waste,

Or in that frost-bound Aetna dream some Typhon's lair ?

Yet 'twere a grievous error 20

To think that here no forms are seen or heard.

The subtle force of Life is not so soon deterred,

And even the glittering shores of Erebus and Terror,
Untenanted and rigid as they seem,
Harbour a countless herd
Of beast, fish, bird, that their own shelters mock
Or lurk in blinding gleam ;
And silver sea, white landscape, and black rock
With undetected animation teem.
Nor is a land for half the year benighted, 30
A trackless and immeasurable wold
By marrow-piercing cold
And barrenness so desperately blighted
But thou didst there behold
Creatures in which thy lord would have delighted—
Nay, which his inward vision long ago had sighted.

Thou didst see Proteus there, and his amphibious flock
Of soft-eyed seals disporting on the beach,
Either lumbering along from rock to rock,
Or blissfully rotating each 40
In his particular marble dock,
Or in its brittle walls laborious channels hollowing.
Thou didst see Phorcus and his playful following
Of huge cetaceans
Riding along the waves, tumbling and wallowing,
And tracedst their luxurious gyrations
By their high-sorted fountains.
Thou hast seen penguins too, their populous nations
Blackening the distant mountains,
Or near at hand hast watched their congregations 50
Flickering with movement, filled with clamours raucous,
Or thou hast heard a small loquacious knot
On icy crag some raid or rapine plot

In squabbling conclave or intriguing caucus.

And thou mayst even have snatched, in some remoter spot,

Like a sea-lion couchant in stalactite grot,
A fleeting glimpse of Glaucus.

But fitly to rehearse

And with full circumstance unfold each miracle

Were difficult in this exacting verse

60

And far too long a task for measures lyrical.

Nay, it would need thy master's happy skill,

And a fifth Georgic fill,

In some such playful-epic vein

And in such human image to describe

With grandiose-tender strain

The wondrous commune of the penguin tribe.

The civil code which they from birth imbibe,

Their ritual, fasts, and games,

"A world in little, yet a vision rare,"

70

Their hymeneal bliss, which our own conduct shames,

Their inexhaustible parental care,

And all the complex laws of their small lives,

His were the mind most proper to declare

Who voiced the marvels of our humble hives,

And the minute society of bees laid bare.

All Nature's works he saw

With wonder, love, and awe,

And might have used his humour mixed with pity

To illuminate and draw

80

The charm and pathos of that Polar city,

And those quaint colonists of ice and wave,

Who, in a world with circling perils rife,

Their pygmy species to eternize, brave
The elements themselves in constant strife,
And mid perpetual cold preserve the fire of life.

But thou henceforth shalt tell a double tale :
One, of that patriarchal navigator
Who from the flames of Pergamum set sail,
Destined old wonders of the deep to probe ; 90
This shall men read in the familiar lines
Of which thou art the small perpetuator.

But thou hast other speaking signs
In blots and blurs that stain thy weathered robe,
Whether of sportive baptism at the Equator,
Or caught in some Antarctic gale
Where seas, unreined by continents, roll round the
globe.

And in these characters the skilled translator
May read another tale
Rich in romance no less, vaster in scale ; 100
A voyage of enterprise heroic,
As full of purpose high,
Labour indomitable, and courage Stoic,
And no less sure than that, of immortality.

So, when thy future readers shall discover
How, in that hospitable land,
His first long phase of storm and struggle over,
The weather-beaten Trojan scanned,

Far from his ancient home, in their outlandish art,
Scenes of old war, and sad imperishable glories ; 110

The vision stirred his heart,

He cried, " Here, too, are tears ; here, too, com-
passion "—

Then shall they pause, and fashion
Another story's deathless record to thy story's,
And their proud hearts shall beat,
While they with reverence the great line repeat,
Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris ?

Yes, regions where no conquering Roman ever stepped
To man's invincibility redound ;
Where, in white leagues of snowdrift blizzard-swept, 120
A solitary mound
Through the long polar nights unvisited,
Where that last sleep they slept,
Commemorates their labours and our loss ;
There men once wept ;
There too, there tears were shed ;
There, symbol of compassion, stands a simple Cross.

Yet not the lands they gained, nor the funereal Pole
They reached, alas too late, their triumph sum ;
It was no popular feat that was their goal, 130
But to make tameless Scythian tracts become
The provinces of Knowledge ; to unroll
Nature's Sibylline scroll,
Teach mysteries to speak that had been dumb,
And to promote the bounds of man's imperial soul.

And this was their achievement ;
Here they annexed and charted an immense domain,
For their own memories a greater gain,
For us, a better solace in bereavement
Than that priority which they did not attain. 140
And surely of all men he
Whose art created thee,

If to thy pages he his heart committed,
-And truly held that man most fortunate
Who to the secret springs
And causes of all things
Had skill to penetrate,
Would count them to be envied and not pitied.

Happy is he indeed,
Happier than vulgar minds can ever grasp, 150
Who chose the book of Knowledge to unclasp,
And her high doctrines read ;
Filled with a faith more large than any creed
By the harmonious spectacle of Science,
Awed but not cowed,
He finds in Truth alone his light and lead,
And to her service vowed
Bids Superstition, Fear, and Fate, and Death, defiance.

Such faith enjoys the man who treasured thee.
Yet is he doubly blest, 160
Being dowered in like degree
With what thou dost attest
To have been in Virgil's mind the next felicity.
His devious foot ere now hath pressed
The grassy shrine of many a rural god ;
Of wood-nymphs' arbours he hath been a ranger,
And in Silvanus' precincts trod,
Nor is elusive Pan to him a stranger,
For he loves peace no less than he dares danger.

These are the two ideals at whose leading 170
He now goes forth, not to destroy, but heal ;

And, because thousands of brave men are bleeding,
To face that death which he would never deal,
All his most cherished labours has relinquished.
May he survive till Europe shall resume
Those noble quests that now have been extinguished,
And that devotion use, which wasteful wars consume.

But thou, henceforth on thy twin laurels rest ;
And let thy thumb'd and venerable pages
Stand silent monitors to future ages 180
Of what alone can make man truly great and blest.

To spread the power of learning, and the light of art,
Further than sage or poet ever dreamed,
To leave not yet unfurled
No corner of Earth's chart,
No nation of her millions unredeemed ;
But like that box which dying Douglas hurled
Charged with his cause and his great leader's heart,
Far, far ahead of our own vital span
To fling Regeneration at the world— 190
This is the glory, this the work, of man ;
And of this progress thou, small book, wast in the van.

A. Y. CAMPBELL.

V

THE CARVER IN STONE

He was a man with wide and patient eyes,
Grey, like the drift of twitch-fires blown in June,
That, without fearing, searched if any wrong
Might threaten from your heart. Grey eyes he had

Under a brow was drawn because he knew
So many seasons to so many pass
Of upright service, loyal, unabased
Before the world seducing, and so, barren
Of good words praising and thought that mated his.
He carved in stone. Out of his quiet life 10
He watched as any faithful seaman charged
With tidings of the myriad faring sea,
And thoughts and premonitions through his mind
Sailing as ships from strange and storied lands
His hungry spirit held, till all they were
Found living witness in the chiselled stone.
Slowly out of the dark confusion, spread
By life's innumerable venturings
Over his brain, he would triumph into the light
Of one clear mood, unblemished of the blind 20
Legions of errant thought that cried about
His rapt seclusion : as a pearl unsoiled,
Nay, rather washed to lonelier chastity,
In gritty mud. And then would come a bird,
A flower, or the wind moving upon a flower,
A beast at pasture, or a clustered fruit,
A peasant face as were the saints of old,
The leer of custom, or the bow of the moon
Swung in miraculous poise—some stray from the world
Of things created by the eternal mind 30
In joy articulate. And his perfect mood
Would dwell about the token of God's mood,
Until in bird or flower or moving wind
Or flock or shepherd or the troops of heaven
It sprang in one fierce moment of desire
To visible form.

Then would his chisel work among the stone,
Persuading it of petal or of limb
Or starry curve, till risen anew there sang
Shape out of chaos, and again the vision
Of one mind single from the world was pressed
Upon the daily custom of the sky
Or field or the body of man.

40

His people
Had many gods for worship. The tiger-god,
The owl, the dewlapped bull, the running pard,
The camel and the lizard of the slime,
The ram with quivering fleece and fluted horn,
The crested eagle and the doming bat
Were sacred. And the king and his high priests
Decreed a temple, wide on columns huge,
Should top the cornlands to the sky's far line.
They bade the carvers carve along the walls
Images of their gods, each one to carve
As he desired, his choice to name his god. . .
And many came ; and he among them, glad
Of three leagues' travel through the singing air
Of dawn among the boughs yet bare of green,
The eager flight of the spring leading his blood
Into swift lofty channels of the air,
Proud as an eagle riding to the sun. . . .
An eagle, clean of pinion—there's his choice.

50

60

Daylong they worked under the growing roof,
One at his leopard, one the staring ram,
And he winning his eagle from the stone,
Until each man had carved one image out,
Arow beyond the portal of the house.

They stood arow, the company of gods,
Camel and bat, lizard and bull and ram,
The pard and owl, dead figures on the wall,
Figures of habit driven on the stone 70
By chisels governed by no heat of the brain
But drudges of hands that moved by easy rule.
Proudly recorded mood was none, no thought
Plucked from the dark battalions of the mind
And throned in everlasting sight. But one
God of them all was witness of belief
And large adventure dared. His eagle spread
Wide pinions on a cloudless ground of heaven,
Glad with the heart's high courage of that dawn
Moving upon the ploughlands newly sown, 80
Dead stone the rest. He looked, and knew it so.

Then came the king with priests and counsellors
And many chosen of the people, wise
With words weary of custom, and eyes askew
That watched their neighbour face for any news
Of the best way of judgement, till, each sure
None would determine with authority,
All spoke in prudent praise. One liked the owl
Because an owl blinked on the beam of his barn.
One, hoarse with crying gospels in the street, 90
Praised most the ram, because the common folk
Wore breeches made of ram's wool. One declared
The tiger pleased him best,—the man who carved
The tiger-god was halt out of the womb—
A man to praise, being so pitiful.
And one, whose eyes dwelt in a distant void,
With spell and omen pat upon his lips,

And a purse for any crystal prophet ripe,
A zealot of the mist, gazed at the bull—
A lean ill-shapen bull of meagre lines 100
That scarce the steel had graved upon the stone—
Saying that here was very mystery
And truth, did men but know. And one there was
Who praised his eagle, but remembering
The lither pinion of the swift, the curve
That liked him better of the mirrored swan.
And they who carved the tiger-god and ram,
The camel and the pard, the owl and bull,
And lizard, listened greedily, and made
Humble denial of their worthiness, 110
And when the king his royal judgement gave
That all had fashioned well, and bade that each
Re-shape his chosen god along the walls
Till all the temple boasted of their skill,
They bowed themselves in token that as this
Never had carvers been so fortunate.

Only the man with wide and patient eyes
Made no denial, neither bowed his head.
Already while they spoke his thought had gone
Far from his eagle, leaving it for a sign 120
Loyally wrought of one deep breath of life,
And played about the image of a toad
That crawled among his ivy leaves. A queer
Puff-bellied toad, with eyes that always stared
Sidelong at heaven and saw no heaven there,
Weak-hamned, and with a throttle somehow twisted
Beyond full wholesome draughts of air, and skin
Of wrinkled lips, the only zest or will

The little flashing tongue searching the leaves.
And king and priest, chosen and counsellor, 130
Babbling out of their thin and jealous brains,
Seemed strangely one ; a queer enormous toad
Panting under giant leaves of dark,
Sunk in the loins, peering into the day.
Their judgement wry he counted not for wrong
More than the fabled poison of the toad
Striking at simple wits ; how should their thought
Or word in praise or blame come near the peace
That shone in seasonable hours above
The patience of his spirit's husbandry ? 140
They foolish and not seeing, how should he
Spend anger there or fear—great ceremonies
Equal for none save great antagonists ?
The grave indifference of his heart before them
Was moved by laughter innocent of hate,
Chastising clean of spite, that moulded them
Into the antic likeness of his toad.
Bidding for laughter underneath the leaves.

He bowed not, nor disputed, but he saw
Those ill-created joyless gods, and loathed, 150
And saw them creeping, creeping round the walls,
Death breeding death, wile witnessing to wile,
And sickened at the dull iniquity
Should be rewarded, and for ever breathe
Contagion on the folk gathered in prayer.
His truth should not be doomed to march among
This falsehood to the ages. He was called,
And he must labour there ; if so the king
Would grant it, where the pillars bore the roof

A galleried way of meditation nursed 160
Secluded time, with wall of ready stone
In panels for the carver set between
The windows—there his chisel should be set,—
It was his plea. And the king spoke of him,
Scorning, as one lack-fettle, among all these
Eager to take the riches of renown ;
One fearful of the light or knowing nothing
Of light's dimension, a witling who would throw
Honour aside and praise spoken aloud
All men of heart should covet. Let him go 170
Grubbing out of the sight of these who knew
The worth of substance ; there was his proper trade.

A squat and curious toad indeed. . . . The eyes,
Patient and grey, were dumb as were the lips,
That, fixed and governed, hoarded from them all
The larger laughter lifting in his heart.
Straightway about his gallery he moved,
Measured the windows and the virgin stone,
Till all was weighed and patterned in his brain.
Then first where most the shadow struck the wall, 180
Under the sills, and centre of the base,
From floor to sill out of the stone was wooed
Memorial folly, as from the chisel leapt
His chastening laughter searching priest and king—
A huge and wrinkled toad, with legs asplay,
And belly loaded, leering with great eyes
Busily fixed upon the void.

All days

His chisel was the first to ring across
The temple's quiet ; and at fall of dusk

Passing among the carvers homeward, they 190
Would speak of him as mad, or weak against
The challenge of the world, and let him go
Lonely, as was his will, under the night
Of stars or cloud or summer's folded sun,
Through crop and wood and pastureland to sleep.
None took the narrow stair as wondering
How did his chisel prosper in the stone,
Unvisited his labour and forgot.
And times when he would lean out of his height
And watch the gods growing along the walls, 200
The row of carvers in their linen coats
Took in his vision a virtue that alone
Carving they had not nor the thing they carved.
Knowing the health that flowed about his close
Imagining, the daily quiet won
From process of his clean and supple craft,
Those carvers there, far on the floor below,
Would haply be transfigured in his thought
Into a gallant company of men
Glad of the strict and loyal reckoning 210
That proved in the just presence of the brain
Each chisel-stroke. How surely would he prosper
In pleasant talk at easy hours with men
So fashioned if it might be—and his eyes
Would pass again to those dead gods that grew
In spreading evil round the temple walls;
And, one dead pressure made, the carvers moved
Along the wall to mould and mould again
The self-same god, their chisels on the stone
Tapping in dull precision as before, 220
And he would turn, back to his lonely truth.

He carved apace. And first his people's gods,
About the toad, out of their sterile time,
Under his hand thrilled and were recreate.
The bull, the pard, the camel and the ram,
Tiger and owl and bat—all were the signs
Visibly made body on the stone

Of sightless thought adventuring the host
That is mere spirit; these the bloom achieved
By secret labour in the flowing wood

230

Of rain and air and wind and continent sun. . . .

His tiger, lithe, immobile in the stone,
A swift destruction for a moment leashed,
Sprang crying from the jealous stealth of men
Opposed in cunning watch, with engines hid
Of torment and calamitous desire.

His leopard, swift on lean and paltry limbs,
Was fear in flight before accusing faith.

His bull, with eyes that often in the dusk
Would lift from the sweet meadow grass to
watch

240

Him homeward passing, bore on massy beam
The burden of the patient of the earth.

His camel bore the burden of the damned,
Being gaunt, with eyes aslant along the nose.

He had a friend, who hammered bronze and iron
And cupped the moonstone on a silver ring,

One constant like himself, would come at night
Or bid him as a guest, when they would make
Their poets touch a starrier height, or search

Together with unparsimonious mind

250

The crowded harbours of mortality.

And there were jests, wholesome as harvest ale

Of homely habit, bred of hearts that dared
Judgement of laughter under the eternal eye :
This frolic wisdom was his carven owl.
His ram was lordship on the lonely hills,
Alert and fleet, content only to know
The wind mightily pouring on his fleece,
With yesterday and all unrisen suns
Poorer than disinherited ghosts. His bat
Was ancient envy made a mockery,
Cowering below the newer eagle carved
Above the arches with wide pinion spread,
His faith's dominion of that happy dawn.

260

And so he wrought the gods upon the wall,
Living and crying out of his desire,
Out of his patient incorruptible thought,
Wrought them in joy was wages to his faith.
And other than the gods he made. The stalks
Of bluebells heavy with the news of spring,
The vine loaded with plenty of the year,
And swallows, merely tenderness of thought
Bidding the stone to small and fragile flight ;
Leaves, the thin relics of autumnal boughs,
Or massed in June. . . .

270

All from their native pressure bloomed and sprang
Under his shaping hand into a proud
And governed image of the central man,—
Their moulding, charts of all his travelling.
And all were deftly ordered, duly set
Between the windows, underneath the sills,
And roofward, as a motion rightly planned,
Till on the wall, out of the sullen stone,

280

A glory blazed, his vision manifest,
His wonder captive. And he was content.

And when the builders and the carvers knew
Their labour done, and high the temple stood
Over the cornlands, king and counsellor
And priest and chosen of the people came
Among a ceremonial multitude
To dedication. And, below the thrones
Where king and archpriest ruled above the throng,
Highest among the ranked artificers
The carvers stood. And when, the temple vowed
To holy use, tribute and choral praise
Given as was ordained, the king looked down
Upon the gathered folk, and bade them see
The comely gods fashioned about the walls,
And keep in honour men whose precious skill
Could so adorn the sessions of their worship,
Gravely the carvers bowed them to the ground.
Only the man with wide and patient eyes
Stood not among them ; nor did any come
To count his labour, where he watched alone
Above the coloured throng. He heard, and looked
Again upon his work, and knew it good,
Smiled on his toad, passed down the stair unseen,
And sang across the teeming meadows home.

290

300

JOHN DRINKWATER.

VI

LEPANTO

WHITE founts falling in the courts of the sun,
And the Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they run ;
There is laughter like the fountains in that face of all
men feared,

It stirs the forest darkness, the darkness of his beard,
It curls the blood-red crescent, the crescent of his lips,
For the inmost sea of all the earth is shaken with his
ships.

They have dared the white republics up the capes of
Italy,

They have dashed the Adriatic round the Lion of the Sea,
And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,
And called the kings of Christendom for swords about
the Cross. 10

The cold queen of England is looking in the glass,
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass ;
From evening isles fantastical rings faint the Spanish gun,
And the Lord upon the Golden Horn is laughing in the
sun.

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has
stirred,

Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half attained stall,
The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,
The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird
has sung,

That once went singing southward when all the world
was young. 20

In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,
Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.
Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
Don John of Austria is going to the war,
Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon,
and he comes.

Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world, 30
Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.
Love-light of Spain—hurrah!
Death-light of Africa!
Don John of Austria
Is riding to the sea.

Mahound is in his paradise above the evening star,
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)
He moves a mighty turban on the timeless houri's
knees,
His turban that is woven of the sunsets and the seas.
He shakes the peacock gardens as he rises from his ease, 40
And he strides among the tree-tops and is taller than the
trees,
And his voice through all the garden is a thunder sent
to bring
Black Azrael and Ariel and Ammon on the wing.
Giants and the Genii,
Multiplex of wing and eye,
Whose strong obedience broke the sky
When Solomon was king.

They rush in red and purple from the red clouds of the
morn,

From temples where the yellow gods shut up their eyes
in scorn ;

They rise in green robes roaring from the green hells
of the sea 50

Where fallen skies and evil hues and eyeless creatures be ;
On them the sea-valves cluster and the grey sea-forests
curl,

Splashed with a splendid sickness, the sickness of the
pearl ;

They swell in sapphire smoke out of the blue cracks
of the ground,—

They gather and they wonder and give worship to
Mahound.

And he saith, " Break up the mountains where the
hermit-folk can hide,

And sift the red and silver sands lest bone of saint abide,
And chase the Giaours flying night and day, not giving
rest,

For that which was our trouble comes again out of the
west.

We have set the seal of Solomon on all things under
sun, 60

Of knowledge and of sorrow and endurance of things
done ;

But a noise is in the mountains, in the mountains, and
I know

The voice that shook our palaces—four hundred years
ago :

It is he that saith not ' Kismet ' ; it is he that knows
not Fate ;

It is Richard, it is Raymond, it is Godfrey in the gate !
It is he whose loss is laughter when he counts the wager
worth :

Put down your feet upon him, that our peace be on the
earth ! ”

For he heard drums groaning and he heard guns jar,
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)

Sudden and still—hurrah !

70

Bolt from Iberia !

Don John of Austria

Is gone by Alcalar,

St. Michael's on his Mountain in the sea-roads of the
north,

(*Don John of Austria is girt and going forth.*)

Where the grey seas glitter and the sharp tides shift

And the sea-folk labour and the red sails lift.

He shakes his lance of iron and he claps his wings of
stone ;

The noise is gone through Normandy ; the noise is gone
alone ;

The North is full of tangled things and texts and aching
eyes,

80

And dead is all the innocence of anger and surprise,

And Christian killeth Christian in a narrow dusty
room,

And Christian dreadeth Christ that hath a newer face of
doom,

And Christian hateth Mary that God kissed in Galilee.

But Don John of Austria is riding to the sea.

Don John calling through the blast and the eclipse,

Crying with the trumpet, with the trumpet of his lips,

Trumpet that sayeth ha !

Domino gloria !

Don John of Austria

90

Is shouting to the ships.

King Philip's in his closet with the Fleece about his neck,
(*Don John of Austria is armed upon the deck.*)

The walls are hung with velvet that is black and soft
as sin,

And little dwarfs creep out of it and little dwarfs creep in.
He holds a crystal phial that has colours like the moon,
He touches, and it tingles, and he trembles very soon,
And his face is as a fungus of a leprous white and grey,
Like plants in the high houses that are shuttered from
the day,

And death is in the phial and the end of noble work, 100

But Don John of Austria has fired upon the Turk.

Don John's hunting, and his hounds have bayed—

Booms away past Italy the rumour of his raid.

Gun upon gun, ha ! ha !

Gun upon gun, hurrah !

Don John of Austria

Has loosed the cannonade.

The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke,
(*Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.*)

The hidden room in man's house where God sits all the
year, 110

The secret window whence the world looks small and
very dear.

He sees as in a mirror on the monstrous twilight sea

The crescent of his cruel ships whose name is mystery ;

They fling great shadows foe-wards, making Cross and
Castle dark ;

They veil the plumed lions on the galleys of St. Mark ;
And above the ships are palaces of brown, black-bearded
chiefs,

And below the ships are prisons, where with multitudi-
nous griefs,

Christian captives sick and sunless, all a labouring race
repines

Like a race in sunken cities, like a nation in the mines.

They are lost like slaves that swat, and in the skies of
morning hung 120

The stairways of the tallest gods when tyranny was young.
They are countless, voiceless, hopeless as those fallen or
fleeing on

Before the high Kings' horses in the granite of Babylon.
And many a one grows witless in his quiet room in hell,
Where a yellow face looks inward through the lattice of
his cell,

And he finds his God forgotten, and he seeks no more
a sign—

(But Don John of Austria has burst the battle line !)

Don John pounding from the slaughter-painted poop,
Purpling all the ocean like a bloody pirate's sloop,
Scarlet running over on the silvers and the golds, 130

Breaking of the hatches up and bursting of the holds,
Thronging of the thousands up that labour under sea,
White for bliss and blind for sun and stunned for liberty.

Vivat Hispania !

Domino gloria !

Don John of Austria

Has set his people free !

Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the
sheath,

(Don John of Austria rides homeward with a wreath,)

And he sees across a weary land a straggling road in
Spain, 140

Up which a lean and foolish knight for ever rides in vain,
And he smiles, but not as Sultans smile, and settles

back the blade . . .

(But Don John of Austria rides home from the Crusade.)

G. K. CHESTERTON.

VII

GATES OF DAMASCUS

Four great gates has the city of Damascus,

And four Grand Wardens, on their spears reclining,

All day long stand like tall stone men

And sleep on the towers when the moon is shining.

This is the song of the East Gate Warden

*When he locks the great gate and smokes in his
garden.*

Postern of Fate, the Desert Gate, Disaster's Cavern,
Fort of Fear,

The Portal of Bagdad am I, the Doorway of Diarbekir.

The Persian Dawn with new desires may net the flushing
mountain spires :

But my gaunt buttress still rejects the suppliance of
those mellow fires. 10

Pass not beneath, O Caravan, or pass not singing. Have
you heard

That silence where the birds are dead yet something
pipeth like a bird ?

Pass not beneath ! Men say there blows in stony deserts
still a rose

But with no scarlet to her leaf—and from whose heart
no perfume flows.

Wilt thou bloom red where she buds pale, thy sister rose ?
Wilt thou not fail

When noonday flashes like a flail ? Leave, nightingale,
the caravan !

Pass then, pass all ! “ Bagdad ! ” ye cry, and down
the billows of blue sky

Ye beat the bell that beats to hell, and who shall thrust
ye back ? Not I.

The Sun who flashes through the head and paints the
shadows green and red.—

The Sun shall eat thy fleshless dead, O Caravan, O
Caravan !

20

And one who licks his lips for thirst with fevered eyes
shall face in fear

The palms that wave, the streams that burst, his last
mirage, O Caravan !

And one—the bird-voiced Singing-man—shall fall behind
thee, Caravan !

And God shall meet him in the night, and he shall sing
as best he can.

And one the Bedouin shall slay, and one, sand-stricken
on the way

Go dark and blind ; and one shall say—" How lonely is
the Caravan ! "

Pass out beneath, O Caravan, Doom's Caravan, Death's
Caravan !

I had not told ye, fools, so much, save that I heard your
Singing-man.

This was sung by the West Gate's keeper

When heaven's hollow dome grew deeper. 30

I am the gate toward the sea : O sailor men, pass out
from me !

I hear you high on Lebauon, singing the marvels of the
sea.

The dragon-green, the luminous, the dark, the serpent-
haunted sea,

The snow-besprinkled wine of earth, the white-and-blue-
flower foaming sea.

Beyond the sea are towns with towers, carved with lions
and lily flowers,

And not a soul in all those lonely streets to while away
the hours.

Beyond the towns, an isle where, bound, a naked giant
bites the ground :

The shadow of a monstrous wing looms on his back : and
still no sound.

Beyond the isle a rock that screams like madmen shouting
in their dreams,

From whose dark issues night and day blood crashes in
a thousand streams. 40

Beyond the rock is Restful Bay, where no wind breathes
or ripple stirs,
And there on Roman ships, they say, stand rows of
metal mariners.

Beyond the bay in utmost West old Solomon the Jewish
King
Sits with his beard upon his breast, and grips and guards
his magic ring :

And when that ring is stolen, he will rise in outraged
majesty,
And take the World upon his back, and fling the World
beyond the sea.

*This is the song of the North Gate's master,
Who singeth fast, but drinketh faster.*

I am the gay Aleppo Gate: a dawn, a dawn and thou
art there :
Eat not thy heart with fear and care, O brother of the
beast we hate ! 50

Thou hast not many miles to tread, nor other foes than
fleas to dread ;
Homs shall behold thy morning meal and Hama see thee
safe in bed.

Take to Aleppo filigrane, and take them paste of apricots,
And coffee tables botched with pearl, and little beaten
brassware pots :

And thou shalt sell thy wares for thrice the Damascene
retailers' price,
And buy a fat Armenian slave who smelleth odorous
and nice.

Some men of noble stock were made : some glory in the
murder-blade :

Some praise a Science or an Art, but I like honourable
Trade !

Sell them the rotten, buy the ripe ! Their heads are
weak ; their pockets burn ;

Aleppo men are mighty fools. Salaam Aleikum ! Safe
return ! 60

*This is the song of the South Gate Holder,
A silver man, but his song is older.*

I am the Gate that fears no fall : the Mih ab of Damascus
wall,

The bridge of booming Sinai : the Arch of Allah all in all.

O spiritual pilgrim rise : the night has grown her single
horn :

The voices of the souls unborn are half adream with
Paradise.

To Meccah thou hast turned in prayer with aching heart
and eyes that burn :

Ah Hajji, whither wilt thou turn when thou art there,
when thou art there ?

God be thy guide from camp to camp : God be thy shade
from well to well ;

God grant beneath the desert stars thou hear the Pro-
phet's camel bell. 70

And God shall make thy body pure, and give thee
knowledge to endure

• This ghost-life's piercing phantom-pain, and bring thee
out to Life again.

And God shall make thy soul a Glass where eighteen
thousand Aeons pass,

And thou shalt see the gleaming Worlds as men see dew
upon the grass.

And son of Islam, it may be that thou shalt learn at
journey's end

Who walks thy garden eve on eve, and bows his head, and
calls thee Friend.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER.

VIII

THE PIGEONS

THE pigeons, following the faint warm light,
Stayed at last on the roof till warmth was gone,
Then in the mist that's hastier than night
Disappeared all behind the carved dark stone,
Huddling from the black cruelty of the frost.

With the new sparkling sun they swooped and came
Like a cloud between the sun and street, and then
Like a cloud blown from the blue north were lost,

Vanishing and returning ever again,

Small cloud following cloud across the flame

10

That clear and meagre burned and burned away
And left the ice unmelting day by day.

... Nor could the sun through the roof's purple slate
(Though his gold magic played with shadow there
And drew the pigeons from the streaming air)
With any fiery magic penetrate.

Under the roof the air and water froze,
And no smoke from the gaping chimney rose.
The silver frost upon the window-pane
Flowered and branched each starving night anew, 20
And stranger, lovelier and crueller grew ;
Pouring her silver that cold silver through,
The moon made all the dim flower bright again.

. . . Pouring her silver through that barren flower
Of silver frost, until it filled and whitened
A room where two small children waited, frightened
At the pale ghost of light that hour by hour
Stared at them till though fear slept not they slept.
And when that white ghost from the window crept,
And day came and they woke and saw all plain, 30
Though still the frost-flower blinded the window-pane,
And touched their mother and touched her hand in vain,
And wondered why she woke not when they woke ;
And wondered what it was their sleep that broke
When hand in hand they stared and stared, so frightened ;
They feared and waited, and waited all day long
While all the shadows went and the day brightened,
All the ill shadows but one shadow strong.

Outside were busy feet and human speech
And daily cries and horns. Maybe they heard, 40
Painfully wondering still, and each to each
Leaning, and listening if their mother stirred—
Cold, cold,
Hungering as the long slow hours grew old,
Though food within the cupboard idle lay
Beyond their thought, or but beyond their reach.

The soft blue pigeons all the afternoon
Sunned themselves on the roof or rose at play,
Then with the shrinking light fluttered away ;
And once more came the icy-hearted moon,
Staring down at the frightened children there
That could but shiver and stare.

59

... How many hours, how many days, who knows ?
Neighbours there were who thought they had gone away
To return some luckier or luckless day.
No sound came from the room : the cold air froze
The very echo of the children's sighs.
And what they saw within each other's eyes,
Or heard each other's heart say as they peered
At the dead mother lying there, and feared
That she might wake, and then might never wake,
Who knows, who knows ?
None heard a living sound their silence break.

60

In those cold days and nights how many birds
Flittering above the fields and streams all frozen
Watched hungrily the tended flocks and herds—
Earth's chosen nourished by earth's wise self-chosen !
How many birds suddenly stiffened and died
With no plaint cried,
The starved heart ceasing when the pale sun ceased !
And when the new day stepped from the same cold East
The dead birds lay in the light on the snow-flecked field,
Their song and beautiful free winging stilled.

70

I walked under snow-sprinkled hills at night,
And starry sprinkled skies deep blue and bright.

The keen wind thrust with his knife against the thin
Breast of the wood as I went tingling by
And heard a weak cheep-cheep—no more—the cry
Of a bird that crouched the smitten wood within. . . .
But no one heeded that sharp spiritual cry 80
Of the two children in their misery,
When in the cold and famished night death's shade
More terrible the moon's cold shadows made.
How was it none could hear
That bodiless crying, birdlike, sharp and clear ?

I cannot think what they, unanswered, thought
When the night came again and shadows moved
As the moon through the ice-flower stared and roved,
And that unyielding Shadow came again.
That Shadow came again unseen and caught 90
The children as they sat listening in vain,
Their starved hearts failing ere the Shadow removed.
And when the new morn stepped from the same cold East
They lay unawakening in the barren light,
Their song and their imaginations bright,
Their pains and fears and all bewilderment ceased . . .
While the brief sun gave
New beauty to the death-flower of the frost,
And pigeons in the froze air swooped and tossed,
And glad eyes were more glad and grave less grave. 100

There is not pity enough in heaven or earth,
There is not love enough, if children die
Like famished birds—oh, less mercifully.
A great wrong's done when such as these go forth
Into the starless dark, broken and bruised,

With mind and sweet affection all confused,
And horror closing round them as they go.
There is not pity enough !

And I have made, children, these verses for you,
Lasting a little longer than your breath, 110
Because I have been haunted with your death ;
So men are driven to things they hate to do.
Jesus, forgive us all our happiness,
As Thou dost blot out all our miseries.

JOHN FREEMAN.

IX

THE LODESTAR

FROM hag to hag o'er miles of quaking moss,
Benighted in an unknown countryside
Among gaunt hills, the stars my only guide,
Bewildered by peat-waters black and deep,
Wherein the mocking stars swam, at a loss
Which way to turn for shelter from the night,
I struggled on until, my head grown light
From utter weariness, I almost sank
To rest among the tussocks soft and dank,
Drowsing half-dazed and murmuring it were best 10
To stray no further, but to lie at rest,
Beneath the cold white stars for evermore—
When suddenly I came across
A runnel oozing from the moss,
And knew that if I followed where it led
'Twould bring me to a valley in the end
Where there'd be houses and perhaps a bed.

And so the little runnel was my friend,
And as I walked beside its path at first
It kept a friendly silence, then it burst 20
Into a friendly singing as it rambled
Among big boulders down a craggy steep,
'Mid bracken nigh breast-deep
Through which I scrambled,
Half-blind and numb for sleep,
Until it seemed that I could strive no more :
When, startled by a startled sheep,
Looking up, I saw a track—
A stony trackway dimly white
Disappearing in the night 30
Across a waste of heather burnt and black ;
And so I took it, mumbling o'er and o'er
In witlessness of weariness
And featherheaded foolishness—
A track must lead at some time to a door.

And trudging to this senseless tune
That kept on drumming in my head,
I followed where the pathway led ;
But all too soon
It left the ling and nigh was lost 40
Among the bent that glimmered grey
About my sore-bewildered way,
But when at length it crossed
A brawling burn, I saw afar
A cottage window light,
A star, but no cold heavenly star,
A warm red star of welcome in the night.
Far off it burned upon the black hillside,

Sole star of earth in all that waste so wide—
A little human lanthorn in the night,
Yet more to me than all the bright
Unfriendly stars of heaven so cold and white.

50

And as it dimly shone,
Though towards it I could only go
With stumbling step and slow,
It quickened in my heart a kindred glow,
And seemed to draw me on
That last rough mile or so,
Now seen, now hidden when the track
Dipped down into a slack,
And all the earth again was black ;
And from the unseen fern,
Grey ghost of all bewildered things,
An owl brushed by me on unrustling wings,
And gave me quite a turn
And sent a shiver through my hair.

60

Then again more fair
Flashed the friendly light,
Beckoning through the night,
A golden glowing square,
Growing big and clearer
As I drew slowly nearer
With eager stumbling feet,
And snuffed the homely reek of peat,
And saw above me, lone and high,
A cottage dark against the sky—
A candle shining on the window-sill.

70

With thankful heart I climbed the hill
And stood at last before
The dark and unknown door, 80
Wondering if food and shelter lay behind,
And what the welcome I should find,
Whether kindly or unkind ;
But I had scarcely knocked to learn my fate
When the latch lifted and the door swung wide
On creaking hinges, and I saw inside
A frail old woman very worn and white,
Her body all a-tremble in the light,
Who gazed with strange still eyes into the night
As though she did not see me, but looked straight 90
Beyond me to some unforgotten past ;
And I was startled when she said at last
With strange still voice : " You're welcome, though
you're late."

And then an old man, nodding in a chair
Beside the fire, awoke with sleepy stare,
And rose in haste and led her to her seat
Beside the cosy hearth of glowing peat,
And muttered to me, as he took her hand :
" It's queer, it's queer that she to-night should
stand

Who has not stood alone for fifteen year. 100
Though I heard nothing, she was quick to hear.
I must have dozed, but she has been awake
And listening for your footstep since daybreak :
For she was certain you would come to-day—
Ay, she was sure, for all that I could say ;
Talk as I might, she would not go to bed

Till you should come. Your supper has been spread
This long while : you'll be ready for your meat."
With that he beckoned me to take a seat
Before the table, lifting from the crook 110
The singing kettle ; while with far-off look,
As though she neither saw nor heard,
His wife sat gazing at the glowing peat.

So, wondering sorely, I sat down to eat ;
And yet she neither spoke nor stirred,
But in her high-backed chair sat bolt-upright
With still grey eyes and tumbled hair, as white
As fairy-cotton, straggling o'er her brow
And hung in wisps about her wasted cheek.
But when I'd finished and drawn near the fire 120
She suddenly turned round to speak,
Her old eyes kindling with a tense desire.
Her words came tremblingly : " You'll tell me now
What news you bring of him, my son ? " Amazed,
I met that searching and love-famished look ;
And then the old man, seeing I looked dazed,
Made shift to swing aside the kettle-crook,
And muttered in my ear :
" John Netherton, his name."—And, as I gazed , 130
Into the peat that broke in clear blue flame,
Remembrance flashed upon me with the name,
And I slipped back in memory twenty-year—
Back to the fo'c'sle of a villainous boat ;
And once again in that hot hell I lay
Watching the smoky lanthorn duck and sway,
As though in steamy stench it kept afloat . . .
The fiery fangs of fever at my throat,

And my poor broken arm, ill-set,
A bar of white-hot iron at my side :
And as I lay with staring eyes pricked wide 140
Throughout eternities of agony
I saw a big black shadow stoop o'er me,
And felt a cool hand touch my brow and wet
My cracking lips, and sank in healing sleep ;
And when I rose from that unfathomed deep
I saw the youngest of that rascal crew
Beside my bunk, and heard his name, and knew
'Twas he who'd brought me ease : but soon ashore
We parted, and I never saw him more,
Though some while after in another place 150
I heard he'd perished in a drunken brawl.

And now the old man touched me, to recall
My wandering thoughts, and breathed again the name ;
And I looked up into the mother's face
That burned before me with grey eyes aflame.
And so I told her how I'd met her son,
And of the kindly things that he had done :
And as I spoke her quivering spirit drank
The news that it had thirsted for so long,
And for a flashing moment gay and strong 160
Life flamed in her old eyes, then slowly sank.
" And he was happy when you saw him last ? "
She asked, and I was glad to answer—" Yes."
Then all sat dreaming without stir or sound
As gradually she sank into the past
With eyes that looked beyond all happiness,
Beyond all earthly trouble and distress,
Into some other world than ours. The thread

That long had held the straining life earthbound
Was loosed at last : her eyes grew dark : her head 170
Drooped slowly on her breast, and she was dead.

The old man at her side spoke not a word
As we arose and bore her to her bed,
And laid her on the clean white quilt to rest
With calm hands folded on her quiet breast :
And, hour by hour, he hardly even stirred,
Crouching beside me in the ingle-seat
And staring, staring at the still red glow :
But, when the fire was burning low
And he arose to bring fresh peat, 180
He muttered with dull voice and slow :
“ This fire has not burned out through all these years,
Not since the hearthstone first was set—
And that is nigh two hundred years ago.
My father's father built this house, and I . . .
I thought my son . . . ” and then he gave a sigh,
And as he stooped his wizened cheek was wet
With slowly trickling tears.
And now we hearkened while an owl's keen cry
Sang through the silence as it fluttered nigh 190
The cottage window, dazzled by the light,
Then back, with fainter hootings, into night.

But when the fresh peats broke into a blaze
He watched it with a steady dry-eyed gaze,
And spoke once more : “ And he, dead too !
You did not tell her, but I knew . . . I knew ! ”

And now came all the tale of their distress—
Their only son in wanton waywardness

Had left them nearly thirty years ago,
And they had never had a word from him 200
In all that time . . . The reckless blow
Of his unkindness struck his mother low . . .
Her hair, as ruddy as the fern
In late September by a moorland burn,
Had shrivelled rimy-white
In one short summer's night :
And they had looked and looked for his return . . .
His mother set for him at every meal
And kept his bed well aired . . . the knife and fork
I'd used were John's . . . but as all hope grew dim 210
She sickened, dwindling feebler every day,
Though, when it seemed that she must pass away,
She grew more confident that, ere she passed,
A stranger would bring news to her at last
Of her lost son. " And when I woke in bed
Beside her as the dawn was burning red,
She turned to me with sleepless eyes and said :
' The news will come to-day.' "

He spoke no more ; and silent in my seat
With burning eyes upon the burning peat 220
I pondered on the strangest of strange things
That had befallen in my vagrant life,
And how at last my idle wanderings
Had brought me to this old man and his wife :
And as I brooded o'er the blaze,
I thought with awe of that steadfast desire
Which, unto me unknown,
Had drawn me through long years by such strange ways
From that dark fo'c'sle to this cottage fire.

And now, at last, quite spent I fell asleep 230
And slumbered long and deep ;
And when I waked the peat was smouldering white ,
Upon the white hearthstone ;
And over heath and bent dawn kindled bright
Beyond dark ridges in a rosy fleece,
While from the little window morning light
Fell on her face, made holy with the peace
That passeth understanding, and was shed
In tender beams upon the low-bow'd head
Of that old man forlorn beside the bed. 240

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON.

X

FRIENDS BEYOND

WILLIAM DEWY, Tranter Reuben, Farmer Ledlow late
at plough.

Robert's kin, and John's, and Ned's,
And the Squire, and Lady Susan, lie in Mellstock church-
yard now !

"Gone," I call them, gone for good, that group of local hearts and heads :

Yet at mothy curfew-tide,
And at midnight when the noon-heat breathes it back
from walls and leads.

They've a way of whispering to me—fellow-wight who
yet abide—

In the muted, measured note
Of a ripple under archways, or a lone cave's stillicide :

" We have triumphed : this achievement turns the bane
to antidote, 10

• Unsuccesses to success,
Many thought-worn eves and morrows to a morrow free
of thought.

" No more need we corn and clothing, feel of old terrestrial
stress ;

Chill detraction stirs no sigh ;
Fear of death has even bygone us : death gave all that
we possess."

W. D. : " Ye mid burn the old bass-viol that I set such
value by."

Squire : " You may hold the manse in fee,
You may wed my spouse, may let my children's
memory of me die."

Lady S. : " You may have my rich brocades, my laces ;
take each household key ;

Ransack coffer, desk, bureau ; 20
Quiz the few poor treasures hid there, con the
letters kept by me."

Far. : " Ye mid zell my favourite heifer, ye mid let the
charlock grow,

Foul the grinterns, give up thrift."

Far. Wife : " If ye break my best blue china, children,
I shan't care or ho."

All : " We've no wish to hear the tidings, how the
people's fortunes shift ;

What your daily doings are ;
Who are wedded, born, divided ; if your lives
beat slow or swift.

"Curious not the least are we if our intents you make or
mar,

If you quire to our old tune,
If the City stage still passes, if the weirs still roar afar." 30

—Thus, with very gods' composure, freed those crosses
late and soon

Which, in life, the Trine allow

(Why, none witteth), and ignoring all that haps beneath
the moon,

William Dewy, Tranter Reuben, Farmer Ledlow late
at plough,

Robert's kin, and John's, and Ned's,

And the Squire, and Lady Susan, murmur mildly to me
now.

THOMAS HARDY.

XI

THE SONG OF HONOUR

I CLIMBED a hill as light fell short,
And rooks came home in scramble sort,
And filled the trees, and flapped and fought,
And sang themselves to sleep ;
An owl from nowhere with no sound
Swung by and soon was nowhere found,
I heard him calling half-way round,
Holloing loud and deep ;
A pair of stars, faint pins of light,
Then many a star, sailed into sight,
And all the stars, the flower of night,

Were round me at a leap ;
To tell how still the valleys lay
I heard a watchdog miles away,
And bells of distant sheep.

I heard no more of bird or bell,
The mastiff in a slumber fell,
I stared into the sky,
As wondering men have always done
Since beauty and the stars were one, 20
Though none so hard as I.

It seemed, so still the valleys were,
As if the whole world knelt at prayer,
Save me and me alone ;
So pure and wide that silence was
I feared to bend a blade of grass,
And there I stood like stone.

There, sharp and sudden, there I heard—
Ah ! some wild lovesick singing bird
Woke singing in the trees ? 30
The nightingale and babble-wren
Were in the English greenwood then,
And you heard one of these ?

The babble-wren and nightingale
Sang in the Abyssinian vale
That season of the year !
Yet, true enough, I heard them plain,
I heard them both again, again,
As sharp and sweet and clear
As if the Abyssinian tree 40

Had thrust a bough across the sea,
Had thrust a bough across to me
With music for my ear !

I heard them both, and oh ! I heard
The song of every singing bird
That sings beneath the sky,
And with the song of lark and wren
The song of mountains, moths and men
And seas and rainbows vie !

I heard the universal choir, 50
The Sons of Light exalt their Sire
With universal song,
Earth's lowliest and loudest notes,
Her million times ten million throats
Exalt Him loud and long,
And lips and lungs and tongues of Grace
From every part and every place
Within the shining of His face,
The universal throng.

I heard the hymn of being sound 60
From every well of honour found
In human sense and soul :
The song of poets when they write
The testament of Beautysprite
Upon a flying scroll,
The song of painters when they take
A burning brush for Beauty's sake
And limn her features whole—

The song of men divinely wise 70
Who look and see in starry skies

Not stars so much as robins' eyes,
And when these pale away
Hear flocks of shiny pleiades
Among the plums and apple trees
Sing in the summer day—

The song of all both high and low
To some blest vision true,
The song of beggars when they throw
The crust of pity all men owe
To hungry sparrows in the snow, 80
Old beggars hungry too—
The song of kings of kingdoms when
They rise above their fortune Men,
And crown themselves anew—

The song of courage, heart and will
And gladness in a fight,
Of men who face a hopeless hill
With sparking and delight,
The bells and bells of song that ring
Round banners of a cause or king 90
From armies bleeding white—

The song of sailors every one
When monstrous tide and tempest run
At ships like bulls at red,
When stately ships are twirled and spun
Like whipping tops and help there's none
And mighty ships ten thousand ton
Go down like lumps of lead—

And song of fighters stern as they
At odds with fortune night and day, 100

Crammed up in cities grim and grey
As thick as bees in hives,
Hosannas of a lowly throng
Who sing unconscious of their song,
Whose lips are in their lives—

And song of some at holy war
With spells and ghouls more dread by far
Than deadly seas and cities are
Or hordes of quarrelling kings—
The song of fighters great and small, 110
The song of pretty fighters all
And high heroic things—

The song of lovers—who knows how
Twitched up from place and time
Upon a sigh, a blush, a vow,
A curve or hue of cheek or brow,
Borne up and off from here and now
Into the void sublime !

And crying loves and passions still
In every key from soft to shrill 120
And numbers never done,
Dog-loyalties to faith and friend,
And loves like Ruth's of old no end,
And intermission none—

And burst on burst for beauty and
For numbers not behind,
From men whose love of motherland
Is like a dog's for one dear hand,
Sole, selfless, boundless, blind—

And song of some with hearts beside 130
For men and sorrows far and wide,
Who watch the world with pity and pride
And warm to all mankind—

And endless joyous music rise
From children at their play,
And endless soaring lullabies
From happy, happy mothers' eyes,
And answering crows and baby-cries,
How many who shall say !
And many a song as wondrous well 140
With pangs and sweets intolerable
From lonely hearths too grey to tell,
God knows how utter grey !
And song from many a house of care
When pain has forced a footing there
And there's a Darkness on the stair
Will not be turned away—

And song—that song whose singers come
With old kind tales of pity from
The Great Compassion's lips, 150
That make the bells of Heaven to peal
Round pillows frosty with the feel
Of Death's cold finger tips—

The song of men all sorts and kinds,
As many tempers, moods and minds
As leaves are on a tree,
As many faiths and castes and creeds,
As many human bloods and breeds
As in the world may be ;

The song of each and all who gaze
On Beauty in her naked blaze,
Or see her dimly in a haze,
Or get her light in fitful rays
And tiniest needles even,
The song of all not wholly dark,
Not wholly sunk in stupor stark
Too deep for groping Heaven—

160

And alleluias sweet and clear
And wild with beauty men mishear,
From choirs of song as near and dear
To Paradise as they,
The everlasting pipe and flute
Of wind and sea and bird and brute,
And lips deaf men imagine mute
In wood and stone and clay :

The music of a lion strong
That shakes a hill a whole night long,
A hill as loud as he,
The twitter of a mouse among
Melodious greenery,
The ruby's and the rainbow's song,
The nightingale's—all three,
The song of life that wells and flows
From every leopard, lark and rose
And everything that gleams or goes
Lack-lustre in the sea.

180

I heard it all, each, every note
Of every lung and tongue and throat,
Ay, every rhythm and rhyme

Of everything that lives and loves 190
And upward, ever upward moves
From lowly to sublime !
Earth's multitudinous Sons of Light,
I heard them lift their lyric might
With each and every chanting sprite
That lit the sky that wondrous night
As far as eye could climb !

I heard it all, I heard the whole
Harmonious hymn of being roll
Up through the chapel of my soul 200
And at the altar die,
And in the awful quiet then
Myself I heard, Amen, Amen,
Amen I heard me cry !
I heard it all, and then although
I caught my flying senses, Oh,
A dizzy man was I !
I stood and stared ; the sky was lit,
The sky was stars all over it,
I stood, I knew not why, 210
Without a wish, without a will,
I stood upon that silent hill
And stared into the sky until
My eyes were blind with stars and still
I stared into the sky.

RALPH HODGSON.

XII

THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain
 shall meet,
 Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judge-
 ment Seat ;
 But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed,
 nor Birth,
 When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come
 from the ends of the earth !*

KAMAL is out with twenty men to raise the Border-side,
 And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's
 * pride :

He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the
 dawn and the day,
 And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her
 far away.

Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of
 the Guides :

" Is there never a man of all my men can say where
 Kamal hides ? " 10

Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the
 Ressaldar :

" If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know
 where his pickets are.

At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into
 Bonair,

But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
 So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,

By the favour of God ye may cut him off ere he win to
the Tongue of Jagai.

But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly
turn ye then,

For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain are
sown with Kamal's men.

There is rock to the left and rock to the right, and low
lean thorn between,

And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man
is seen." 20

The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough
dun was he,

With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell and the
head of the gallows-tree.

The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him
stay to eat—

Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long
at his meat.

He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can
fly,

Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the
Tongue of Jagai,

Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon
her back,

And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the
pistol crack.

He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling
ball went wide.

"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show now
if ye can ride!" 30

It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-
devils go,

The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a barren doe.

The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head above,

But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as a maiden plays with a glove.

There was rock to the left and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,

And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho' never a man was seen.

They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,

The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn.

The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled the rider free. 40

He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room was there to strive,—

“ ’Twas only by favour of mine,” quoth he, “ ye rode so long alive :

There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a clump of tree,

But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.

If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a row :

If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,

The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly.”

Lightly answered the Colonel's son : " Do good to bird
and beast,

But count who come for the broken meats before thou
makest a feast. 59

If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my
bones away,

Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than a thief
could pay.

They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their
men on the garnered grain,

The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all
the cattle are slain.

But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy brethren
wait to sup,

The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl, dog, and
call them up !

And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and gear
and stack,

Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight my own
way back ! "

Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon
his feet.

" No talk shall be of dogs," said he, " when wolf and
grey wolf meet. 60

May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or
breath ;

What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the
dawn with Death ? "

Lightly answered the Colonel's son : " I hold by the
blood of my clan :

Take up the mare for my father's gift—by God, she has
carried a man ! "

The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled
against his breast,

"We be two strong men," said Kamal then, "but she
loveth the younger best.

So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-
studded rein,

My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups
twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,

"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye
take the mate from a friend?" 70

"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for
the risk of a limb.

Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to
him!"

With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a
mountain-crest—

He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked
like a lance in rest.

"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a
troop of the Guides,

And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder
rides.

Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and
bed,

Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.
So, thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her

foes are thine,

And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of
the Border-line, 80

And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way
to power—

Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am
hanged in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the eyes, and
there they found no fault,

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on
leavened bread and salt :

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on
fire and fresh-cut sod,

On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the
Wondrous Names of God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy
the dun,

And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there
went forth but one.

And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty
swords flew clear—

There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood
of the mountaineer. 90

"Ha' done ! ha' done !" said the Colonel's son. "Put
up the steel at your sides !

Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—to-night
'tis a man of the Guides !"

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain
shall meet,*

*Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judge-
ment Seat ;*

*But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor
Birth,*

*When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come
from the ends of the earth !*

RUDYARD KIPLING.

XIII

FRAGMENTS

TROY TOWN is covered up with weeds,
The rabbits and the pismires brood
On broken gold, and shards, and beads
Where Priam's ancient palace stood.

The floors of many a gallant house
Are matted with the roots of grass ;
The glow-worm and the nimble mouse
Among her ruins flit and pass.

And there, in orts of blackened bone,
The widowed Trojan beauties lie,
And Simois babbles over stone
And waps and gurgles to the sky.

10

Once there were merry days in Troy,
Her chimneys smoked with cooking meals,
The passing chariots did annoy
The sunning housewives at their wheels.

And many a lovely Trojan maid
Set Trojan lads to lovely things ;
The game of life was nobly played,
They played the game like Queens and Kings. 20

So that, when Troy had greatly passed
In one red roaring fiery coal,
The courts the Grecians overcast
Became a city in the soul.

In some green island of the sea,
Where now the shadowy coral grows
In pride and pomp and empery
The courts of old Atlantis rose.

In many a glittering house of glass
The Atlanteans wandered there ; 30
The paleness of their faces was
Like ivory, so pale they were.

And hushed they were, no noise of words
In those bright cities ever rang ;
Only their thoughts, like golden birds,
About their chambers thrilled and sang.

They knew all wisdom, for they knew
The souls of those Egyptian Kings
Who learned, in ancient Babilu,
The beauty of immortal things. 40

They knew all beauty—when they thought
The air chimed like a stricken lyre,
The elemental birds were wrought,
The golden birds became a fire.

And straight to busy camps and marts
The singing flames were swiftly gone ;
The trembling leaves of human hearts
Hid boughs for them to perch upon.

And men in desert places, men
Abandoned, broken, sick with fears, 50
Rose singing, swung their swords agen,
And laughed and died among the spears.

The green and greedy seas have drowned
That city's glittering walls and towers,
Her sunken minarets are crowned
With red and russet water-flowers.

In towers and rooms and golden courts
The shadowy coral lifts her sprays :
The scrawl hath gorged her broken orts,
The shark doth haunt her hidden ways. 60

But, at the falling of the tide,
The golden birds still sing and gleam,
The Atlanteans have not died,
Immortal things still give us dream.

The dream that fires man's heart to make,
To build, to do, to sing or say
A beauty Death can never take,
An Adam from the crumbled clay.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

XIV

PHOEBUS WITH ADMETUS

I

WHEN by Zeus relenting the mandate was revoked,
Sentencing to exile the bright Sun-God,
Mindful were the ploughmen of who the steer had yoked,
Who : and what a track showed the upturned sod !
Mindful were the shepherds as now the noon severe
Bent a burning eyebrow to brown evetide,
How the rustic flute drew the silver to the sphere,
Sister of his own, till her rays fell wide.

God ! of whom music
And song and blood are pure,
The day is never darkened
That had thee here obscure.

10

II

Chirping none the scarlet cicadas crouched in ranks :
Slack the thistle-head piled its down-silk grey :
Scarce the stony lizard sucked hollows in his flanks :
Thick on spots of umbrage our drowsed flocks lay.
Sudden bowed the chestnuts beneath a wind unheard,
Lengthened ran the grasses, the sky grew slate :
Then amid a swift flight of winged seed white as curd,
Clear of limb a Youth smote the master's gate. 20
God ! of whom music
And song and blood are pure,
The day is never darkened
That had thee here obscure.

III

Water, first of singers, o'er rocky mount and mead,
First of earthly singers, the sun-loved rill,
Sang of him, and flooded the ripples on the reed,
Seeking whom to waken and what ear fill.
Water, sweetest soother to kiss a wound and cool,
Sweetest and divinest, the sky-born brook, 30
Chuckled, with a whimper, and made a mirror-pool
Round the guest we welcomed, the strange hand shook.
God ! of whom music
And song and blood are pure,
The day is never darkened
That had thee here obscure.

IV

Many swarms of wild bees descended on our fields :

Stately stood the wheatstalk with head bent high .
Big of heart we laboured at storing mighty yields,

Wool and corn, and clusters to make men cry ! 40
Hand-like rushed the vintage ; we strung the bellied
skins

Plump, and at the sealing the Youth's voice rose :
Maidens clung in circle, on little fists their chins ;

Gentle beasties through pushed a cold long nose.

God ! of whom music

And song and blood are pure,

The day is never darkened

That had thee here obscure.

V

Foot to fire in snowtime we trimmed the slender shaft :

Often down the pit spied the lean wolf's teeth 50
Grin against his will, trapped by masterstrokes of
craft ;

Helpless in his froth-wrath as green logs seethe !
Safe the tender lambs tugged the teats, and winter
sped

Whirled before the crocus, the year's new gold.
Hung the hooky beak up aloft the arrowhead

Reddened through his feathers for our dear fold.

God ! of whom music

And song and blood are pure,

The day is never darkened

That had thee here obscure.

57

Takes we drank of giants at war with Gods above :
 Rocks were they to look on, and earth climbed air !
 Tales of search for simples, and those who sought of love
 Ease because the creature was all too fair.
 Pleasant ran our thinking that while our work was good,
 Sure as fruits for sweat would the praise come fast.
 He that wrestled stoutest and tamed the billow-brood
 Danced in rings with girls, like a sail-flapped mast.
 God ! of whom music
 And song and blood are pure,
 The day is never darkened
 That had thee here obscure.

70

VIT

Lo, the herb of healing, when once the herb is known,
Shines in shady woods bright as new-sprung flame.
Ere the string was tightened we heard the mellow tone,
After he had taught how the sweet sounds came.
Stretched about his feet, labour done, 'twas as you see
Red pomegranates tumble and burst hard rind.
So began contention to give delight and be
Excellent in things aimed to make life kind. 80
God ! of whom music
And song and blood are pure,
The day is never darkened
That had thee here obscure.

VIII

You with shelly horns, rams ! and promontory goats,
You whose browsing beards dip in coldest dew !

Bulls, that walk the pastures in kingly-flashing coats !

Laurel, ivy, vine, wreathed for feasts not few !

You that build the shade-roof, and you that court the
rays,

You that leap besprinkling the rock stream-rent : 90

He has been our fellow, the morning of our days ;

Us he chose for housemates, and this way went.

God ! of whom music

And song and blood are pure,

The day is never darkened

That had thee here obscure.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

XV

SENT FROM EGYPT WITH A FAIR ROBE OF TISSUE TO A SICILIAN VINE-DRESSER (276 B.C.)

Put out to sea, if wine thou wouldest make

Such as is made in Cos : when open boat

May safely launch, advice of pilots take ;

And find the deepest bottom, most remote

From all encroachment of the crumbling shore,

Where no fresh stream tempers the rich salt wave,

Forcing rash sweetness on sage ocean's brine ;

As youthful shepherds pour

Their first love forth to Battos gnarled and grave,

fooling shrewd age to bless some fond design. 10

Not after storm ! but when, for a long spell,

No white-maned horse has raced across the blue,

Put from the beach ! lest troubled be the well—

Less pure thy draught than from such depth were due.

Fast close thy largest jars, prepared and clean !
Next weight each buoyant womb down through the flood,
Far down ! when, with a cord the lid remove,
And it will fill unseen,
Swift as a heart Love smites sucks back the blood :—
This bubbles, deeper born than sighs, shall prove. 20

If thy bowed shoulders ache, as thou dost haul—
Those groan who climb with rich ore from the mine ;
Labour untold round Ilion girt a wall ;
A god toiled that Achilles' arms might shine ;
Think of these things and double knit thy will !
Then, should the sun be hot on thy return,
Cover thy jars with piles of bladder weed,
Dripping, and fragrant still
From sea-wolds where it grows like bracken-fern :
A grapnel dragged will soon supply thy need. 30

Home to a tun convey thy precious freight !
Wherein, for thirty days, it should abide,
Closed, yet not quite closed from the air, and wait
While, through dim stillness, slowly doth subside
Thick sediment. The humour of a day,
Which has defeated youth and health and joy,
Down, through a dreamless sleep, will settle thus,
Till riseth maiden gay
Set free from all glooms past—or else a boy
Once more a school-friend worthy Troilus. 40

Yet to such cool wood tank some dream might dip :
Vision of Aphrodite sunk to sleep,
Or of some sailor let down from a ship,
Young, dead, and lovely, while across the deep,

Through the calm night, his hoarse-voiced comrades
chaunt—

So far at sea, they cannot reach the land
To lay him perfect in the warm brown earth.
Pray that such dreams there haunt !

While, through damp darkness, where thy tun doth
stand,

Cold salamanders sidle round its girth.

50

Gently draw off the clear and tomb it yet

For other twenty days, in cedarn casks !

Where through trance, surely, prophecy will set ;

As, dedicated to light temple-tasks,

The young priest dreams the unknown mystery.

Through Ariadne, knelt disconsolate

In the sea's marge, so welled back warmth which throbbed
With nuptial promise : she

Turned ; and, half-choked through dewy glens, some
great,

Some magic drone of revel coming sobbed.

60

Of glorious fruit, indeed, must be thy choice,

Such as has fully ripened on the branch,

Such as due rain, then sunshine, made rejoice,

Which, pulped and coloured, now deep bloom doth
blanch ;

Clusters like odes for victors in the games,

Strophe on strophe globed, pure nectar all !

Spread such to dry,—if Helios grant thee grace,

Exposed unto his flames

Two days, or, if not, three ; or, should rain fall,

Stretch them on hurdles in the house four days.

70

Grapes are not sharded chestnuts, which the tree
Lays fall to burst them on the ground, where red
Rolls forth the fruit, from white-lined wards set free,
And all undamaged glows 'mid husks it shed ;
Nay, they are soft and should be singly stripped
From off the bunch, by maiden's dainty hand,
Then dropped through the cool silent depth to sink
(Coy, as herself hath slipped,
Bathing, from shelves in caves along the strand)
Till round each dark grape water barely wink ; 80

Since some nine measures of sea-water fill
A butt of fifty, ere the plump fruit peep,
—Like sombre dolphin shoals when nights are still,
Which penned in Proteus' wizard circle sleep,
And 'twixt them glinting curves of silver glance
If Zephyr, dimpling dark calm, counts them o'er.—
Let soak thy fruit for two days thus, then tread !
While bare-legged bumpkins dance,
Bright from thy bursting press arched spouts shall pour,
And gurgling torrents towards thy vats run red. 90

Meanwhile the maidens, each with wooden rake,
Drag back the skins and laugh at aprons splashed ;
Or youths rest, boasting how their brown arms ache,
So fast their shovels for so long have flashed,
Baffling their comrades' legs with mounting heaps.
Treble their labour ! still the happier they,
Who at this genial task wear out long hours,
Till vast night round them creeps,
When soon the torch-light dance whirls them away ;
For gods who love wine double all their powers. 100

Iacchus is the always grateful god !
His vineyards are more fair than gardens far ;
Hanging, like those of Babylon, they nod
O'er each Ionian cliff and hill-side scar !
While Cypris lends him saltness, depth, and peace ;
The brown earth yields him sap for richest green ;
And he has borrowed laughter from the sky ;
Wildness from winds ; and bees
Bring honey.—Then choose casks which thou hast seen
Are leakless, very wholesome, and quite dry ! 110

That Coan wine the very finest is,
I do assure thee, who have travelled much
And learned to judge of diverse vintages.
Faint not before the toil ! this wine is such
As tempteth princes launch long pirate barks ;—
From which may Zeus protect Sicilian bays,
And, ere long, me safe home from Egypt bring,
Letting no black-sailed sharks
Scent this king's gifts, for whom I sweeten praise
With those same songs thou didst to Chloë sing ! 120

I wrote them 'neath the vine-cloaked elm, for thee.
Recall those nights ! our couches were a load
Of scented lentisk ; upward, tree by tree,
Thy father's orchard sloped, and past us flowed
A stream sluiced for his vineyards ; when, above,
The apples fell, they on to us were rolled,
But kept us not awake.—O Laco, own
How thou didst rave of love !
Now art thou staid, thy son is three years old ;
But I, who made thee love-songs, live alone. 130

Muse thou at dawn o'er thy yet slumbering wife!—
Not chary of her best was nature there,
Who, though a third of her full gift of life
Was spent, still added beauties still more rare;
What calm slow days, what holy sleep at night,
Evolved her for long twilight trystings fraught
With panic blushes and tip-toe surmise:
And then, what mystic might—
All, with a crowning boon, through travail brought!
Consider this and give thy best likewise! 140

Ungrateful be not! Laco, ne'er be that!
Well worth thy while to make such wine 'twould be:
I see thy red face 'neath thy broad straw hat,
I see thy house, thy vineyards, Sicily!—
Thou dost demur, good but too easy friend!
Come, put those doubts away! thou hast strong lads,
Brave wenches; on the steep beach lolls thy ship
Where vine-clad slopes descend,
Sheltering our bay, that headlong rillet glads,
Like a stripped child fain in the sea to dip. 150

T. STURGE MOORE.

XVI

ROADS

I LOVE roads:
The goddesses that dwell
Far along invisible
Are my favourite gods.

Roads go on
While we forget, and are
Forgotten like a star
That shoots and is gone.

On this earth 'tis sure
We men have not made
Anything that doth fade
So soon, so long endure : 10

The hill road wet with rain
In the sun would not gleam
Like a winding stream
If we trod it not again.

They are lonely
While we sleep, lonelier
For lack of the traveller
Who is now a dream only. 20

From dawn's twilight
And all the clouds like sheep
On the mountains of sleep
They wind into the night.

The next turn may reveal
Heaven : upon the crest
The close pine clump, at rest
And black, may Hell conceal.

Often footsore, never
Yet of the road I weary, 30
Though long and steep and dreary,
As it winds on for ever.

Helen of the roads,
The mountain ways of Wales
And the Mabinogion tales
Is one of the true gods,

Abiding in the trees,
The threes and fours so wise,
The larger companies,
That by the roadside be,

40

And beneath the rafter
Else uninhabited
Excepting by the dead ;
And it is her laughter

At morn and night I hear
When the thrush cock sings
Bright irrelevant things,
And when the chancicleer

Calls back to their own night
Troops that make loneliness
With their light footsteps' press,
As Helen's own are light.

50

Now all roads lead to France
And heavy is the tread
Of the living ; but the dead
Returning lightly dance :

Whatever the road bring
To me or take from me,
They keep me company
With their pattering,

60

Crowding the solitude
Of the loops over the downs,
Hushing the roar of towns
And their brief multitude.

EDWARD THOMAS.

XVII

LACRIMAE MUSARUM

(6th October, 1892 ; The Death of Tennyson)

Low, like another's, lies the laurelled head :
The life that seemed a perfect song is o'er :
Carry the last great bard to his last bed.
Land that he loved, thy noblest voice is mute,
Land that he loved, that loved him ! nevermore
Meadow of thine, smooth lawn or wild sea-shore,
Gardens of odorous bloom and tremulous fruit,
Or woodlands old, like Druid couches spread,
The master's feet shall tread.
Death's little rift hath rent the faultless lute : 10
The singer of undying songs is dead.

Lo, in this season pensive-hued and grave,
While fades and falls the doomed, reluctant leaf
From withered Earth's fantastic coronal,
With wandering sighs of forest and of wave
Mingles the murmur of a people's grief
For him whose leaf shall fade not, neither fall.
He hath fared forth, beyond these suns and showers.
For us, the autumn glow, the autumn flame,
And soon the winter silence shall be ours : 20

Him the eternal spring of fadeless fame
Crowns with no mortal flowers.

What needs his laurel our ephemeral tears,
To save from visitation of decay ?
Not in this temporal light alone, that bay
Blooms, nor to perishable mundane ears
Sings he with lips of transitory clay.
Rapt though he be from us,
Virgil salutes him, and Theocritus ;
Catullus, mightiest-brained Lucretius, each 30
Greets him, their brother, on the Stygian beach ;
Proudly a gaunt right hand doth Dante reach ;
Milton and Wordsworth bid him welcome home ;
Keats, on his lips the eternal rose of youth,
Doth in the name of Beauty that is Truth
A kinsman's love beseech ;
Coleridge, his locks aspersed with fairy foam,
Calm Spenser, Chancer suave,
His equal friendship crave ;
And godlike spirits hail him guest, in speech 40
Of Athens, Florence, Weimar, Stratford, Rome.

Nay, he returns to regions whence he came.
Him doth the spirit divine
Of universal loveliness reclaim.
All nature is his shrine.
Seek him henceforward in the wind and sea,
In earth's and air's emotion or repose,
In every star's august serenity,
And in the rapture of the flaming rose.
There seek him if ye would not seek in vain, 50
There, in the rhythm and music of the Whole ;

Yea, and for ever in the human soul
Made stronger and more beauteous by his strain.

For lo ! creation's self is one great choir,
And what is nature's order but the rhyme
Whereto in holiest unanimity
All things with all things move unfalteringly,
Infolded and communal from their prime ?
Who shall expound the mystery of the lyre ?
In far retreats of elemental mind

60

Obscurely comes and goes
The imperative breath of song, that as the wind
Is trackless, and oblivious whence it blows.
Demand of lilies wherefore they are white,
Extort her crimson secret from the rose,
But ask not of the Muse that she disclose
The meaning of the riddle of her might :
Somewhat of all things sealed and recondite,
Save the enigma of herself, she knows.
The master could not tell, with all his lore,
Wherefore he sang, or whence the mandate sped ;
Ev'n as the linnet sings, so I, he said :
Ah, rather as the imperial nightingale,
That held in trance the ancient Attic shore,
And charms the ages with the notes that o'er
All woodland chants immortally prevail !
And now, from our vain plaudits greatly fled,
He with diviner silence dwells instead,
And on no earthly sea with transient roar,
Unto no earthly airs, he sets his sail,
But far beyond our vision and our hail
Is heard for ever and is seen no more.

70

80

No more, O never now,
Lord of the lofty and the tranquil brow,
Shall men behold those wizard locks where Time
Let fall no wintry rime.

Once, in his youth obscure,
The weaver of this verse, that shall endure
By splendour of its theme which cannot die,
Beheld thee eye to eye,

90

And touched through thee the hand
Of every hero of thy race divine,
Ev'n to the sire of all the laurelled line,
The sightless wanderer on the Ionian strand.

Yea, I beheld thee, and behold thee yet :
Thou hast forgotten, but can I forget ?
Are not thy words all goldenly impressed
On memory's palimpsest ?

I hear the utterance of thy sovereign tongue,
I tread the floor thy hallowing feet have trod ;
I see the hands a nation's lyre that strung,
The eyes that looked through life and gazed on God.

100

The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer ;
The grass of yesteryear
Is dead ; the birds depart, the groves decay :
Empires dissolve and peoples disappear :
Song passes not away.

Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
And kings a dubious legend of their reign ;
The swords of Caesars, they are less than rust :
The poet doth remain.

110

Dead is Augustus, Maro is alive ;
And thou, the Mantuan of this age and soil,

With Virgil shalt survive,
Enriching Time with no less honeyed spoil,
The yielded sweet of every Muse's hive ;
Heeding no more the sound of idle praise
In that great calm our tumults cannot reach,—
Master who crown'st our immelodious days
With flower of perfect speech.

120

WILLIAM WATSON.

NOTES

I. THE BACCHANAL OF ALEXANDER

WHEN Alexander the Great ascended the throne of Macedon after the murder of his father Philip in 336 B.C., he turned at once to the completion of his father's unfinished conquests. In the twelve years that followed, he not only conquered almost all of the known world, but explored new lands in Asia, overrunning them as he went. He avenged Greece by overthrowing the Persian Empire (331 B.C.) and pressed forward into the unknown heart of Asia, where he founded cities many of which were named Alexandria in his honour. He crossed the Hindu Kush mountains into India (328 B.C.) and there won fresh victories. But his armies were sated with success and in 325 Alexander returned homewards. For three months the army dragged its way through the desert of Gedrosia, treeless, waterless wastes of soft sand that made marching intolerable. More men were lost here than in all the battles. At length the rich plains of Carmania were reached, with boundless rejoicings that the horrors of Gedrosia were passed. Alexander by now was showing a slackening of his moral fibre and gave himself up to all the excesses of Asiatic luxury, till by a chance word his old ardours were roused again and he showed some of the old heroic spirit which had caused him to be hailed a god, of the lineage of Jupiter Ammon.

1. 2. Carmanian Vale : a province of the Persian Empire, east of the Tigris, and very fertile in comparison with the adjoining desert of Gedrosia.

1. 16. Eastern desert dumb : the " hideous wastes of Gedrosia," west of the mountains of Baluchistan and bordered by the Gulf of Oman, described in ll. 52-8.

1. 30. Bacchus : the god of wine and revelry, known to the Greeks as Dionysus. Mr. Binyon quotes, at the head of his ode, the following passage from Arrian, the Greek historian :—" Alexander, returning from his Indian Conquests, having with infinite difficulty brought his army through the salt deserts of Gedrosia, arrived at the pleasant country of the Carmanians. Some authors tell us, that reclining with his friends upon two chariots chained

together, and having his ears entertained by the most delicious music, he led his army through Carmania, the soldiers following him, with dances and garlands, in emulation of the ancient Bacchanals of Dionysus."

l. 43. **Circean magic** : Circe was the enchantress of the *Odyssey*, whose peculiar power it was to change humans into those animals whom they most resembled in their characters.

ll. 71-2. Arrian asserts with some warrant that during the Eastern campaigns of Cyrus the Elder a Persian army was lost in the desert of Gedrosia.

l. 73. **Semiramis** : a semi-mythical warrior-queen of Assyria of about 800 B.C., the legendary founder of Babylon.

l. 105. **Hydaspes** : the River Jelum, tributary of the Indus, on the banks of which Alexander gained a great victory over Porus (327 B.C.).

l. 107. **Susa** : the chief city in the province of Susiana, east of Babylonia. Here was the winter residence of the Persian kings, and here Alexander celebrated his marriage with the Persian princess, Barsine.

l. 108. **Seven of Macedon** : the seven Macedonian leaders who were "linked with the memory of Alexander's worst crimes and of his most astonishing triumphs." Parmenion is the best known of the seven.

l. 113. **Hephaestion** : Alexander's close personal friend. When he died in 325, Alexander decreed general mourning throughout the empire, and ordered a monument to be erected at Babylon at a cost estimated at 10,000 talents.

l. 116. **Pella** : capital of Macedon.

l. 144. **Peucestas** : a prominent officer in Alexander's army. At the attack on the city of Malli (Mooltan) in India, Peucestas saved the king's life, for which he was rewarded with the satrapy of Persia. This he contrived to hold when the empire fell to pieces after Alexander's death.

l. 148. **Lord of Nysa** : Nysa was the mountain on which Bacchus was traditionally reared by the nymphs. Several places notable for the culture of the vine at an early date were called Nysa. The most appropriate to connect with Alexander is the town in Thrace, the original Nysa of the *Iliad*.

ll. 151-153. cp. the action of King David, II. Sam. xxiii, 15, 16.

l. 163. **Issus** : in Asia Minor, the scene of Alexander's first great victory over Darius the Persian, in 333 B.C.

l. 164. Alexander proceeded to Babylon at the close of 325, after the death of Hephaestion. Though warned by Chaldean soothsayers that evil would befall him if he took the city, he

planned to make it the capital of his empire. He died before his plans were completed.

ll. 168-170. These lines refer to an incident in the storming of Mooltan, when Alexander's reckless courage endangered his life.

l. 181. *Maenad-mummery*: the fantastic actions of the Maenads (or Bacchantes), the frenzied worshippers of Bacchus (Gk., *μαινομαι*, I am mad).

II. THERE IS A HILL

DR. BRIDGES' poem is a finely-coloured Nature miniature, somewhat reminiscent in its richness of the work of Spenser and Keats. The theme and general treatment, however, recall the poets of the country and riverside—Arnold, Tennyson and even Gray. It is interesting to see how the serious and often beautiful description is rounded off with the whimsical vow of secrecy in the last stanza—a light touch that adds to the effect of the poem. The stanza-form used is itself original and effective.

l. 22. *myosote*: forget-me-not.

l. 30. *nemuphars*: water-lilies. Notice in these stanzas the beautiful descriptions of water-weeds and flowers.

l. 46. *curious*: inquisitive.

l. 62. *gibbous*: the nearly-full moon. (Lit., "humped," Latin, *gibbus*—hump.)

III. THE GREAT LOVER

THE untimely death of Rupert Brooke at the Dardanelles in April 1915 gave his poems a popularity which they have in some measure outlived. But the "young Apollo's" personal attraction is reflected in most of his writing, and the sonnets called "1914" remain, perhaps, the flower of English poetry written during the Great War.

The poem printed here, which belongs to the months immediately preceding the outbreak of war, has all that ecstasy of life and joy in familiar things which characterised Brooke. Its catalogue of his loves set what almost became a fashion in later verse. The poem combines the homeliness which has made *The Old Vicarage, Granchester*, so popular, with the triumphant faith which gave "If I should die think only this of me" such a sure and lasting appeal.

l. 15. *inenarrable*: indescribable.

IV. SOLUS HYPERBOREAS

THE title of the poem is a neat adaptation from Virgil's Fourth Georgic: "Solus Hyperboreas glacies . . . Lastrabat" (alone he would roam the fields of Northern ice), descriptive of the fate of Orpheus during the winter months, while his twice-lost bride Eurydice abode in the realms below. The whole poem, says Professor Campbell himself, is full of allusion to the cinema film of Scott's expedition, or to passages in the book, and of course to parallels between that and Virgil.

The British Antarctic Expedition of 1910 was in command of Robert Falcon Scott, R.N. Denis G. Lillie was the biologist on board the *Discovery*. Mr. John Murray publishes Captain Scott's Journal of the Expedition.

ll. 6-19. See the story of Orpheus as told by Proteus to Aristaeus in *Georgics*, iv, 453-527. Read Pope's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*.

l. 8. Erebus is the God of darkness, and hence the lower world. The Erebus of the poem is the loftier of two Polar volcanoes, which "was within sight of the base camp" (Prof. Campbell's note). The other volcano is Terror (l. 23).

l. 9. gloomy king: Dis or Pluto (*Immitis tyrannus*).

ll. 16-19. For the Cyclops of Etna see *Aeneid*, viii, 415 *et seq.*

l. 19. Typhon: a giant, killed by Jupiter and buried under Mt. Etna.

ll. 37-57. See *Georgics*, iv, 429-36. "When Proteus came along, hastening from the waves to his accustomed cave; about him the watery people of the vasty deep splash all around in sport the bitter spray. The sea-calves stretch themselves in sleep in different spots of the shore: the god himself, as oft upon the hills the guardian of the stall, when evening brings the steers back from pasture to their homes, and lambs make keen the hunger of wolves that hear their bleatings, sits down on a rock in the midst, and tells their number" (Lonsdale & Lee).

l. 43. Phorcus: Neptune's son, changed after his death into a sea god:

"immania cete, (of Neptune's retinue)
et senior Glauci chorus . . .

. . . . Phorcique exercitus omnis" (*Aeneid*, v, 822-4)

Huge monsters of the deep, and the ancient band of Glaucus, and all the host of Phorcus.

l. 57. Glaucus was a fisherman changed after death into a sea-god.

l. 63. Virgil's *Georgics* consists of four books and is a didactic poem of great charm dealing with pastoral topics.

l. 70. "*Georg.* iv. 3: 'Admiranda tibi levium spectacula rerum'" (Prof. Campbell's note). "Marvellous shows, though made by trifling things."

ll. 75, 76. The subject matter of the fourth *Georgic* is "aerii mellis caelestia dona," the heavenly gifts of honey born in air.

l. 88. The reference is to Aeneas who, after the destruction of Pergamum (Troy), built his fleet and sailed forth an exile from his native land.

l. 95. The mock ceremony in which Father Neptune and his Court visit a ship that is crossing the line.

ll. 105-117. The reference is to the pictures of the Wars of Troy seen by Aeneas ("the weather-beaten Trojan") on the walls of the Temple of Juno, situated in a grove in the city of Carthage (*Aeneid*, i. 441-93).

l. 117. "What country in the world is not full of our agony?" (*Aen.* i. 400). *Laboris* conveys the notion of both toil and suffering.

l. 131. Scythia roughly corresponds with the former Russian Empire. Its nomad inhabitants, even in classical times, were regarded as a byword for utter barbarism.

l. 133. For the Cumaean Sibyl or prophetess see *Aen.* iii. 441-52.

l. 140. Captain Scott and his party were forestalled by the Norwegian Amundsen in their attempt to reach the South Pole.

l. 146. cp. Virgil's "rerum cognoscere causas."

l. 167. Silvanus was a deity who presided over woods.

l. 168. Pan, the chief god of woods and of shepherds, is said to be "elusive" because of his appearing to shepherds when least expected to do so. See Keats's beautiful *Hymn to Pan*, chanted by Endymion's comrades at the great feast to Pan, in *Endymion*, Book I.

ll. 187-8. Robert Bruce willed that his heart should be buried in Jerusalem. The "Good" Sir James Douglas undertook to carry it thither; but on his way he was killed while fighting in Spain. Bruce's heart was brought back to Scotland and buried in Melrose Abbey.

V. THE CARVER IN STONE

THIS poem adequately represents the quiet, well-finished work of Mr. Drinkwater. It contains much beautiful vocabulary and expression, though in parts—particularly lines 200-205—the symbolism of the narrative is somewhat obscure. Passages like:

"And then would come a bird,
A flower, or the wind moving upon a flower,"

and (of the toad)

"The little flashing tongue searching the leaves,"

reveal the same happiness of phrase and diction as characterises the poet's more familiar lyrics. The subject and treatment, which are more philosophical than realistic, cause this poem to stand somewhat apart from the others in the book. It is easy to trace in the theme the spirit of the man who wrote *Abraham Lincoln* and *Oliver Cromwell*.

l. 5. a brow (which) was drawn : here and elsewhere in the poem the omission of the relative makes the construction difficult as often in Browning.

VI. LEPANTO

THE Battle of Lepanto, Oct. 7, 1571, was the last notable event in the centuries of the Crusades. The battle was fought at sea near the Naupactus of classical history, an important naval base in the Peloponnesian War. Don John of Austria, half-brother of Philip II. of Spain, commanded the allied fleets of Spain, Venice and the Papal States. The Turkish fleet under Ali Pasha was completely destroyed, more than 100 vessels falling into Don John's hands, while the Christian losses were comparatively light. About 12,000 Christian galley slaves, whose sufferings are described in ll. 117-126, were liberated after the battle. It was the signal success of this exploit that fired Don John to carve out a kingdom for himself, since he was a crownless prince "risen from a doubtful seat and half attainted stall."

l. 2. Soldan of Byzantium : when the Turks crossed into Europe and overthrew the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople became their capital.

l. 6. inmost sea : the Mediterranean, all Christian countries round which had been harried by the fleets of Suleiman I.

l. 7. republics : Venice, Este and Romagna (the last two under Papal suzerainty).

l. 8. Lion of the Sea : Venice, more usually known as the "Bride of the Adriatic" from the annual ceremony of the Spesalia. The reference is to the emblem of Venice, the winged lion of St. Mark.

l. 11. cold Queen of England : Elizabeth. "The glass" may be the hour-glass, for Elizabeth studied the turn of events and the times with coolest calculation. There may be a further hint at her vanity.

l. 12. The shadow of the Valois : Henry IV. of Navarre, at first leader of the Huguenots (French Protestants); but in 1593

he became a Catholic in order to ascend the throne of France. He is credited with the cynical remark, "Paris is worth a Mass."

l. 14. The Sultan, Sulciman I., at Constantinople. The Golden Horn is an inlet separating the Christian part of the city from the rest. It forms an exceptionally good harbour, some five miles long.

l. 24. Don John : natural son of the Emperor Charles V., and half-brother of Philip II. of Spain. He was a brilliant but ruthless soldier who first gained distinction by crushing the Moors of Granada in 1570. Still greater fame awaited him in the victory of Lepanto the next year. He schemed to gain for himself a throne in Tunis ; but Philip's jealousy was aroused, and he commissioned him to various thankless offices where his ambition would be kept in check. The last of these was the Viceroyalty of the Netherlands, where he aspired to make himself king. He died suddenly at Namur in 1578, and it was commonly believed that he was poisoned.

l. 36. Mahound : Mahomet (Mohammed).

l. 38. *houri* : one of the seventy-two nymphs assigned to every one of the faithful in the Mohammedan paradise.

l. 43. Azrael, the Angel of Death ; Ariel, the lion of God ; Ammon, the unrevealed one.

l. 45. The Genii had many wings and many eyes.

l. 58. *Giaour* : the Turkish word for infidel, *i.e.*, a non-Mohammedan.

l. 60. seal of Solomon : wisdom. See I. Kings, iii. 5-14.

l. 65. Richard the Lion-heart, King of England ; Raymond of Toulouse (died 1105) ; and Godfrey of Bouillon (died 1100)—all famous Crusaders.

l. 73. *Alcalar* : thirteen towns in Spain are so called.

l. 74. Mont St. Michael, near St. Malo in Brittany. St. Michael was the archangel whose special duty was the defence of Christ : therefore he was of special importance to Crusaders.

ll. 80-84. These lines refer to the turmoil of sects in Europe at the period of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation.

l. 82 refers to the murder of the Duke of Guise at Blois in 1563 ;

l. 83 to the Inquisition and its terrors ; l. 84 is a general reference to the extreme Protestants.

l. 92. King Philip : Philip II. of Spain. As ruler of the Netherlands he was head of the Knightly Order of the Golden Fleece, the highest order of Flemish chivalry.

l. 100. phial : the bottle of poison with which Philip was several times suspected of having removed his opponents or rivals, and Don John himself.

l. 115. galleys of St. Mark : the Venetian galleys of which there was a large contingent in Don John's fleet.

ll. 122-3. Reference is here made to the fantastic disproportion found in Babylonian rock-carvings as records of historical events, where subject or conquered peoples are depicted as only a fraction of the size of the Babylonian kings.

l. 138. Cervantes, dramatist, novelist and poet, though ill with fever, took part in the battle where he lost his left hand. By his creation of Don Quixote he is said to have "laughed away the chivalry of Spain."

VII. GATES OF DAMASCUS

A REMARKABLE poem—full of the wonder and colour and mystery of the East that, very strangely, so well suit our sober English. The four gates tell their varying tales—one of the desert's grim desolation, another of the sea's romance, the third of the delight of merchandise, the last of the pilgrimage to Mecca and the pilgrim's initiation into the deeper meaning of life. In their philosophy is the calm fatalistic wisdom of Omar and of Solomon; and their language is vivid with the burning sun on ship and caravan, on desert and sea, on tower and minaret. Vocabulary and rhythm combine in a subtlety of appeal. Cunning internal rhymes throughout the poem enhance its beauty of sound; and the repetition, particularly at the end of the poem, has some kinship with the repetition and parallelism of the Hebrew poetry in the English Bible.

ll. 11-12. Beautiful lines, made more beautiful by their atmosphere of mystery.

ll. 33-38. Notice the peculiarly Eastern figures in these stanzas.

l. 44. magic ring : see the notes to Sale's Koran.

ll. 49-60. cp. Miss Sackville-West's "Mirage" (included in *A Second Book of Modern Poetry*, Macmillan).

l. 52. Homs, Hama : towns on the road from Damascus to Aleppo.

l. 53. filigrane : an earlier (and the French) form of "filigree."

l. 60. Salsam Aleikum ! : the Arabic greeting, "Peace be upon you !"

l. 63. Mihrab : the prayer-niche in an Arab mosque.

l. 76. cp. the Book of Genesis iii. 8 : "the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day."

VIII. THE PIGEONS

THE Editor is indebted to Mr. John Freeman for the following note:

"The Pigeons" is founded on an episode of the severe winter of 1917. The wife of a soldier in France died suddenly in a flat in Westminster, leaving two children helpless and starving, though food was in the cupboard. Neighbours thought they had gone away, and heard nothing of their movements or cries, and many days elapsed before an entry was forced and the bodies of the family discovered. It may be remembered that the winter was intensely cold, though often bright, and it was supposed that the bird-life of the country suffered severely by the long frost and the hardness of the ground. The London pigeons would suffer little from either cause.

IX. THE LODESTAR

IN truth of feeling, sympathy with the tragedies of humble life, and simplicity of diction, this narrative recalls Wordsworth's *Michael*, though there is no evidence of that deeper mysticism of nature which characterised Wordsworth. The story is refreshingly clear, and its pathos has a simplicity somewhat unfamiliar in modern poetry.

l. 1. hag : a firm spot in a bog. From the beginning of the poem we have the northern atmosphere of Mr. Gibson's native Northumberland.

l. 9. tussocks : tufts of grass.

X. FRIENDS BEYOND

A TYPICAL poem of the last of the Victorian giants—its language and rhythm rough-hewn, its theme the sad and simple realities of life. While it lacks the bitter irony which characterises Hardy's poetry even more than his prose, it has all the poignancy that makes him the most humanly sympathetic of writers. The pathos is deepened by the occasional falling into dialect:

"Ye mid zell my favourite heifer, ye mid let the
charlock grow,
Foul the grinterns, give up thrift."

All the names, of both folk and places, belong to the Wessex novels, to which this poem makes a kind of epilogue. Notice here and there those inversions and odd twists of construction in which Hardy the poet seems to take delight.

- l. 1. Traunter : carrier.
- l. 9. stillicide : drip from the roof.
- l. 16. mid : may.
- l. 23. grinterns : divisions in a granary for storing different kinds of corn.
- l. 24. ho : grieve.

XI. THE SONG OF HONOUR

THE "song of honour" is the paean of worship and wonder that rises continually from Nature and Man. In its crescendo of joy the poem has some kinship with the ecstasy of the Nature psalms and the Book of Job, if not with their majesty. There is fine colour and movement in the language and a deep, almost mystic, sense here and there of the things that remain :

"I stared into the sky,
As wondering men have always done
Since beauty and the stars were one . . ."

At times, too, there is a touch of the tenderness and pity that characterise Mr. Hodgson's own familiar lyric, " 'Twould ring the bells of Heaven."

- l. 64. Beautysprite : the spirit of Beauty.
- l. 71. robins' eyes : a Celtic fancy.
- l. 73. pleiades : lit., "the sailors," the constellation by whose rising and setting Greek mariners fixed their times for sailing; but Greek poets thought of these stars as *peleiades*, i.e., doves, and invented myths to account for the name.
- l. 123. like Ruth's of old : a reference to Ruth's undying love for her mother-in-law Naomi.
- l. 187 *et seq.* Notice here and there in these concluding lines some echo of *The Ancient Mariner*.

XII. THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

THIS poem reaches high water mark as a gallant tale, gallantly told, of border chivalry on the N.W. frontier of India and Afghanistan. The fact that the incident is most probably fictitious in no way detracts from the vigorous charm of the poem itself.

- l. 6. lifted : carried off. Kamal was a border thief or lifter (cp. 67).
- l. 8. calkins : pointed iron-coverings on a horse-shoe which prevent slipping (Lat., *calx*, a heel). Kamal reversed the calkins

so as to make it appear that the stolen mare was ridden in the opposite direction to that actually taken.

l. 9. Guides : Native troops of cavalry and infantry for service in the difficult Frontier country.

l. 11. Khan is a Tartar word meaning prince. The Resaldar is a native captain of a troop of cavalry in the British Indian army.

l. 14. Fort Bukloh and the Tongue of Jagai (16) do not exist.

l. 26. gut : narrow part.

l. 31. dust-devils : a name, in keeping with the wild country, for swirling clouds of dust.

l. 32. ten : i.e., ten points to the antler. The stag is swift, but the "barren doe" is swifter.

l. 33. slugged : a deliberate variant of "slogged," i.e., struck out wildly (cp. the use of the word in cricket). Kipling is contrasting the heavy action of the "dun" with the grace of the mare (cp. 38).

l. 82. Peshawar : chief town on the extreme N.W. frontier of India, 14 miles E. of the famous Khyber Pass, on the great route from India to Afghanistan.

l. 86. The natives of the Punjab are chiefly Mohammedans, whose ritual has many beautiful names for God.

XIII. FRAGMENTS

THIS is a poem on an old theme. In easy, flowing verse Mr. Masfield contrasts the transience of the material with the immortality of the spiritual. Troy Town that was "covered up with weeds" becomes a "city of the soul"; and though "the green and greedy seas" have drowned Atlantis,

"The Atlanteans have not died,
Immortal things still give us dream."

We are tempted to compare the poem with Mr. Masfield's own *On Malvern Hill*, which is itself more than an echo of Mr. Housman's wonderful "On Wenlock edge the wood's in trouble" in *A Shropshire Lad*.

l. 11. Simois : one of the two rivers that rise in Mt. Ida and flow across the Troad to the Hellespont.

l. 28. Atlantis : a continent-island west of the Pillars of Hercules which, according to nebulous Greek history, fought successfully against a combination of Mediterranean powers and

which shortly afterwards disappeared beneath the waves of the Atlantic. Legend ascribes the destruction of the Atlanteans to the impiety of their princes. The fall of Troy was similarly due to the wickedness of Paris in carrying off Helen of Sparta.

XIV. PHOEBUS WITH ADMETUS

PHOEBUS Apollo, the Sun-god, was the prototype of the penitent, and especially of those whose crimes required years of expiation. He was himself twice banished from Olympus. His first offence was the slaying of the Cyclops for which he was compelled by Zeus to serve for a year as herdsman to Admetus, the King of Phææ. For his second offence he had to assist Poseidon in building the walls of Troy for Laomedon.

Stanza 1. The reference in lines 7 and 8 is to Artemis (or Diana), the moon-goddess and therefore sister of Phoebus. The shepherds among whom Phoebus served recall how, in the evening, he would play on his rustic flute until the Moon shone in all the fulness of her glory.

In the refrain Apollo is hailed as the god of music (for the voice of nature greets the sunshine with joy), of song (for he was the leader of the Muses), and of healing (representing the beneficent influence of the sun on the whole world of nature).

St. II. Phoebus arrives at the farm of Admetus.

cicalas : winged insects that make a chirping sound, perhaps the tree-hopper (Lat., *cicada*).

a youth : Phoebus.

the master : Admetus.

St. III. Water—"the sun-loved rill," "the sky-born brook"—welcomes Phoebus.

St. IV. The farm produced "mighty yields" during the stay of Phoebus.

St. V. Phoebus taught the shepherds how to trap wild animals and to shoot birds of prey for the benefit of "our dear fold."

St. VI. He told them tales and taught them the art of dancing. simples : herbs used in medicine (see St. VII).

St. VII. He taught them the art of healing with woodland herbs and the music of the lyre. The bow (l. 55) and the lyre (l. 75) are two of the commonest symbols of Phoebus.

St. VIII. The shepherds call on the beasts of the farm and the branches of all kinds of trees to remember that Phoebus had been their "fellow, the morning of their days."

XV. SENT FROM EGYPT

THE affixed date (276 B.C.) shows that we are to imagine this charming idyll of the Mediterranean an epistle in verse from the Greek poet Theocritus, one of whose real idylls was written to accompany a distaff sent as a present to a friend's wife. The metre and diction as well as the Greek theme of the poem recall the work of Keats.

Stanza I. Battos : name of a Sicilian shepherd in the Idylls of Theocritus.

St. III. The poet consoles his toiling friend by the reminder that gods have worked hard—Apollo and Poseidon (Neptune) in building the walls of Troy for Laomedon ; Hephaestus (Vulcan) in making armour for Achilles.

St. IV. A girl or boy, reduced to ill-temper by over-fatigue, rises next morning from a dreamless sleep restored to good humour.

worthy Troilus : "worthy to be a school- or college-friend of Troilus" (Mr. Sturge Moore).

St. VI. Ariadne, left desolate by Theseus on the island of Naxos, was consoled by the love of Bacchus.

drone : the bass-pipe.

St. VII. Helios : the sun-god.

St. IX. Proteus : an old man of the sea, who tended flocks of sea-monsters. cp. *Solus Hyperboreas*, 37-57, and note thereon.

St. XI. Iacchus : another name of Bacchus.

Cypris : Aphrodite is a goddess of the sea as well as of love ; she is called "Cyprian" because she rose from the sea and stepped ashore on Cyprus.

St. XII. this King : Ptolemy II. Theocritus was born in Cos and afterwards lived in Sicily and at the court of King Ptolemy in Egypt.

St. XIII. Laco : another Sicilian shepherd in Theocritus.

XVI. ROADS

EDWARD THOMAS was well known as a writer of beautiful and delicate prose before he revealed himself as a poet. After his death in action, in April 1917, the verses which he had written in the two years of war before he died were collected in a single volume with a preface by his friend, Mr. Walter de la Mare. They are as finely-wrought as his prose ; as full, too, of the intimate love of the English countryside which characterises such

of his books as *A Literary Pilgrim in England* and *In Pursuit of Spring*, and touched lightly but pathetically with the sorrow of war.

"Roads" is a fine example of the poet's style in verse, and his recurrent theme of the open country made doubly dear by the separation war had forced upon himself and other men.

l. 35. the Mabinogion tales: "children's tales" (Welsh, *mab*, child)—a collection of Arthurian romances of the twelfth century, the original MS. of which is in possession of Jesus College, Oxford. These tales were published, with an elegant translation in English, by Lady C. E. Guest in 1849, and are reprinted in the Everyman Library (Messrs. Dent).

53 ff. Lines which are typical of Thomas's thoughts of the war—gentle, reminiscent, touched with a sorrowful joy.

XVII. LACRIMAE MUSARUM

SIR WILLIAM WATSON'S poetry belongs, in spirit, to an age other than our own: he is the least modern of the moderns. The serene dignity of this poem is characteristic of his finest work. To an age which has rather superciliously "outgrown" Tennyson an elegy on Tennyson's death would seem to make little appeal. There is, indeed, in the poem an exaggeration of praise, a eulogy that leaves us unmoved and even puzzled. But the inevitable reaction against the great Victorian will soon have spent itself.

The influence of Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* is obvious throughout the poem, as well as the influence of *Lycidas* and *Adonais*. It is interesting to note, also, the deliberate "echoes" of the dead master:

"Death's little rift hath rent the faultless lute,"
and

"Ev'n as the linnets sing, so I, he said."

The poem is, in effect, an appreciation of Tennyson's work as well as an elegiac tribute to Tennyson the man.

l. 10. "It is the little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all."

Merlin and Vivien.

l. 29 ff. The great poets, both ancient and modern, with whose work we are most apt to associate Tennyson's. Notice the aptness of the epithets and phrases that describe the various poets.

l. 35. "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty: that is all
Ye know on earth and all ye need to know."

Keats: Ode on a Grecian Urn.

ll. 50-8. A reference to the philosophy of Tennyson, as exemplified particularly in *In Memoriam*.

l. 72. "I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing."
In Memoriam.

l. 85. wizard locks : Tennyson in old age was proud of the fact that his hair had not turned grey.

l. 94. The sightless wanderer : Homer.

ll. 112-3. Maro, Mantuan : Publius Virgilius Maro, of Mantua—the poet Virgil. Tennyson has often been acknowledged as the English Virgil, "the Mantuan of this age and soil."

l. 120. It is ironical that it should be Tennyson's faultless, "perfect speech" that is the cause of his condemnation to-day.

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